United Nations S/PV.7611

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7611th meeting
Wednesday, 27 January 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Rosselli	(Uruguay)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gimolieca
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Japan	Mr. Yoshikawa
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Senegal	Mr. Sambou
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

Letter dated 21 December 2015 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic extended pursuant to Security Council resolution 2196 (2015) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/936)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. *Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

16-01940 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Central African Republic

Letter dated 21 December 2015 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic extended pursuant to Security Council resolution 2196 (2015) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/936)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2016/81, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/936, which contains the text of a letter dated 21 December 2015 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic extended pursuant to Security Council resolution 2196 (2015), addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The Council is ready to proceed to a vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, China, Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2262 (2016).

The meeting rose at 10.10 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7612

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7612th meeting

Wednesday, 27 January 2016, 10.10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Rosselli	(Uruguay)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gimolieca
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Stehelin
	Japan	Mr. Yoshikawa
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015) (S/2016/60)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council. Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

16-01946 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015) (S/2016/60)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator; and Ms. Ertharin Cousin, Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Programme.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/60, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015).

I now give the floor to Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: For over five long years, the Syrian people have endured one of the most savage and brutal conflicts of the twenty-first century. The facts speak for themselves: over 250,000 people killed; well over a million injured; 6.5 million displaced within Syria; almost 4.6 million refugees; and much of the remaining population — some 13.5 million people — in dire need of humanitarian assistance. We must never forget that behind each of these figures are the individual and personal stories of girls, boys, women and men whose lives have been uprooted, whose dreams for the future have been shattered, and who have witnessed and been subjected to unspeakable fear and suffering.

This week, political talks are scheduled to begin, led by Special Envoy De Mistura. I offer him once again the full support of the humanitarian community in his vital endeavour. We must all get behind his tireless efforts to find a political solution to this shameful tragedy. This political process offers a genuine window of opportunity for the international community to come together and find solutions that reduce suffering and bring an end to the conflict. I cannot stress enough that we must not let this opportunity pass.

Since the adoption of resolution 2139 (2014) two years ago, the Secretary-General has reported month after month on the parties' disregard for international humanitarian and human rights law, their repeated non-compliance with the Council's demands on protection of civilians and humanitarian access, and the humanitarian catastrophe that has ensued. This month's report (S/2016/60) is equally as depressing as those before it, highlighting how the human and social cost of this conflict continues to spiral out of control. This vicious cycle of death and destruction carries the grave risk of being seen as having become, in many ways, the new normal in Syria as the search for a political solution continues. But the death, suffering and wanton destruction and disregard for the law should never be seen as normal. This tragedy is man-made. It is hideous but it is avoidable. And we — the Security Council — must come together to stop it.

Every time we think we have reached the nadir of human suffering in this crisis, it continues to sink deeper and deeper before our eyes. The recent pictures of emaciated, starving children in the besieged town of Madaya seemingly shocked the collective conscience of the world. The humanitarian missions to Madaya and the similarly besieged areas of Zabadani, Fu'ah and Kafraya, undertaken by the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) over the past two weeks have delivered desperately needed food, medical and other aid sufficient for one month for over 60,000 people in total.

The original list of those requiring urgent medical evacuation was 19. All of those people have been evacuated. In fact, a total of 37 people out of 400 requiring medical attention have been evacuated. We urgently need to get more medical supplies and teams into Madaya. The last time SARC was able to enter with supplies and teams was 15 January. Many of those remaining need treatment where they are, rather than evacuation. Simple treatments and supplies can provide the care required. We do not know if there are others who require evacuation. That is why it is vital we be able to get independent medical teams in to assess the most appropriate medical care for the sick and injured.

Humanitarian conditions in these areas remain severe and critical, particularly the health of civilians

in Madaya. Negotiations continue to allow the free safe passage — let me repeat, safe passage — of others in both locations whose lives are at serious risk. These negotiations with all parties must conclude urgently to avoid more senseless death and suffering. In the meantime, health supplies in Madaya are dwindling fast, and recent United Nations and SARC requests to the Syrian authorities for medical teams to enter Madaya must be approved without delay or hindrance. We also need similar, immediate safe access to Fu'ah and Kafraya as conditions there also continue to deteriorate sharply.

And why do we negotiate? Why do we request safe access from all parties, but principally the Syrian Government? We do so because although the Council has adopted a resolution to allow for safe, unimpeded access, that access does not always exist for the brave women and men on the ground trying to deliver assistance into these areas. Some simply say to me: "The United Nations should break the sieges", but that would be reckless. It would ential sending convoy drivers and humanitarian workers into the line of fire.

To be frank, the situation in Madaya is only the tip of the iceberg. More and more people are living in areas that are under siege or are harder to reach than ever before. We are continually monitoring the situation on the ground throughout Syria, and based on the latest information we estimate that some 4.6 million people are in hard-to-reach areas, subject to various forms of restrictions on the movement of people and goods that severely limit their access to services and humanitarian assistance. Of that number, we estimate that some 486,700 people are currently living in besieged areas — 274,200 people besieged by the Government of Syria; 200,000 by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL); and 12,500 by non-State armed groups and the Al-Nusra Front.

The continued use of siege and starvation as a weapon of war is reprehensible. The Secretary-General has said that such tactics can constitute a war crime. They must stop immediately. The primary responsibility lies with the party that maintains the siege and routinely and systematically denies people the basic necessities of life. However, other parties that conduct military activities in or from populated areas, using civilians as shields and endangering their safety, also bear their share of responsibility for the immense suffering in besieged areas. And those with influence on the parties can demand it stops. I ask them to do so. Now.

The indiscriminate use of weapons on civilians, residential areas, aid supply routes and civilian infrastructure protected under international law continues, outrageously, with total impunity. Over the past few weeks alone, hundreds of civilians have been killed or injured in direct or indiscriminate attacks by all parties, due to the continued use of explosive weapons in populated areas, including through barrel bombs and other aerial weapons, shelling and car bombs.

For example, on 12 January, reports indicate that airstrikes on Ma'arat al-Numan city, in rural Idlib, killed 33 people, while airstrikes on Sarmada town, in northern Idlib, reportedly killed 29 persons on the same day. In Madimayet, rural Damascus, at least 5 people were killed and 25 more injured when two mortars landed in the city centre on 23 January. Meanwhile, a recent ISIL offensive on besieged Deir ez-Zour city has reportedly resulted in the death of large numbers of civilians, and we also remain extremely concerned about unverified reports of deaths related to severe malnutrition in the city.

Attacks on hospitals and schools continue unabated, with grave repercussions for all civilians, including the 2 million children out of school. In 2015, according to UNICEF, some 35 schools were attacked, with one in four schools closed, damaged or destroyed. Meanwhile, Physicians for Human Rights documented at least 112 attacks on medical facilities — an average of one every three days — as well as the deaths of 107 medical personnel last year.

We have asked the Council repeatedly to demand that the parties to the conflict facilitate unhindered, unconditional and sustained access across Syria, but that is simply not happening. Active conflict and insecurity are limiting factors, but all parties to the conflict continue to deliberately delay or obstruct the delivery of aid. While we continue to do everything in our power to press the parties and influential stakeholders to reach people in need across Syria, restrictions on aid delivery remain a routine and systematic occurrence.

Despite our persistent and unrelenting efforts, our ability to access hard-to-reach and besieged locations remains severely hampered by the pitiful approval rate for inter-agency convoys by the Syrian authorities. In 2015, just over 10 per cent of the 113 requests for inter-agency convoys resulted in the delivery of much-

needed humanitarian and life-saving assistance. A further 10 per cent were approved in principle but could not proceed due to a lack of final approval, insecurity or lack of agreement on safe passage. The United Nations placed some 3 per cent of requests on hold due to insecurity, and almost 75 per cent of requests went unanswered by the Government of Syria. Such inaction is simply unacceptable for a State Member of the United Nations and a signatory to the United Nations Charter.

The impact on the ground is tangible: in 2013, we reached some 2.9 million people through the inter-agency convoy mechanism, but this past year only 620,000. On 11 January, the United Nations requested approval from the Government of Syria to conduct inter-agency convoys to 46 besieged and hard-to-reach areas during the first quarter of 2016. As of 27 January, 16 days later, we have not received all of the necessary approvals for any of these requests. If all these convoys, which remain one of the most effective and efficient ways to reach people across conflict lines, could proceed, we could reach an estimated 1.7 million people in need today who are being subjected to unnecessary and avoidable suffering owing to the parties' indifference to fulfilling their basic international legal obligations.

We are in a race against time. More and more people are slipping out of our reach every day as the conflict intensifies and battle lines tighten. In 2015, the United Nations delivered humanitarian assistance to less than 10 per cent of people in hard-to-reach areas and only around 1 per cent in besieged areas. From our side, the United Nations remains committed to the safe delivery of neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian aid to all people directly affected by the fighting, based on need and vulnerability — never on political considerations. We stand ready to scale up assistance as soon as security conditions and more sustainable access allow. Resources are also vital, and I encourage all Member States to pledge generously at the upcoming London Conference on 4 February for the desperate people inside Syria and for those who have fled into the neighbouring countries. The United Nations and its partners will be able to do our job the best way possible only when we are fully resourced.

At the same time, the Council and Member States with influence must take further steps to ensure that the parties comply with their obligations under international law and the demands of the Council contained in resolution 2139 (2014). Specifically, this will require urgent measures now to ensure that the parties, first, stop targeting civilians, as well as civilian infrastructure, including medical facilities, schools and other infrastructure and services which people depend upon for their survival, including targeted or indiscriminate attacks, as well as the use of explosive weapons or landmines in populated areas, at all times.

Secondly, the parties must also facilitate full, unhindered, unconditional and sustained access to all people in need, including in besieged and hard-to-reach areas, for all types of assistance, including medical and surgical supplies. This must include, for example, immediate approval of the outstanding requests for inter-agency cross-line convoys by the Syrian authorities. Non-State armed groups and listed terrorist groups must also facilitate the deliveries that they are preventing.

Thirdly, the parties must allow freedom of movement for civilians of all ages to enter and exit besieged and hard-to-reach areas in safety and dignity, and permit the immediate medical evacuation of sick and wounded patients to a safe place for treatment.

Even with the worsening situation and continued access challenges, humanitarian workers in Syria continue to stay and deliver aid, often at great personal risk. Humanitarian organizations — both United Nations and non-United Nations — are dedicating unprecedented resources and efforts to reach Syrians in need. Together, we delivered aid to millions of people in 2015, including food assistance to nearly 6 million people per month and health assistance to almost 16 million, and we provided 6.7 million people with water, sanitation and hygiene support, and 4.8 million with basic household items.

I salute the efforts of the thousands of — mostly Syrian — staff and volunteers of the United Nations; the Syrian Arab Red Crescent; the non-governmental organizations (NGOs); the first responders; and the staff of hospitals and clinics throughout the country, who carry out their duties day after day in the face of political pressure and, in some cases, violence and intimidation from the parties to the conflict.

I remind the Council that each day the United Nations and its partners are served by humanitarian heroes: women and men who are willing to risk their lives leading convoys into conflict zones to reach the people who are so desperately in need. We should all be inspired by their example, and we should all salute them. The failure in Syria is a political failure, most

definitely not a failure on the part of these brave women and men and the humanitarian organizations that they represent.

I especially pay tribute to the 82 colleagues who have lost their lives in the line of duty, including an international NGO staff member from GOAL, killed by an improvised explosive device in Idlib just two days ago.

Let me be clear: the continued suffering of the people in Syria cannot be blamed on the humanitarian organizations and staff; it is the failure of both the parties and the international community that has allowed this conflict to continue for far too long. And try as we may, humanitarian action cannot be a substitute for political action. The only solution is through a political dialogue that reduces and ultimately ends the violence. The key stakeholders in the Syria crisis must do what has never been done up to this point and put people before politics.

On the eve of further political talks, it is my hope, and the hope of all humanitarians, that the key stakeholders will finally take the bold, unselfish and courageous decisions necessary to put an end to this ruinous war and the unimaginable suffering it has brought to the Syrian people.

Over the last five years, the Council has demonstrated that when there is political will and a unity of purpose, it is capable of reaching agreement and taking decisive action to deal with the challenges of the conflict in Syria. The Council has taken action on chemical weapons in Syria; it has authorized cross-border humanitarian assistance; and it has taken action recently to launch a political process.

But for the millions of people trapped under siege, malnourished and lacking basic supplies, the Council has simply not done enough. We have left those people with no hope. They believe that the world has forgotten them.

As this conflict approaches its sixth year, now is the time for those Council members with influence on the parties to put their differences aside and come together, at the most senior political levels, to find ways to improve access to the millions of Syrians who remain trapped in besieged and hard-to-reach areas. The Syrian people cannot wait any longer.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. O'Brien for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Cousin.

Ms. Cousin: Mr. President, I wish to thank you for this opportunity.

Ten months ago, in this very Chamber, I reported to the Council the World Food Programme's (WFP) grave concern at the deepening humanitarian crisis inside Syria (see S/PV.7433). I discussed the increasing hardship and deprivation facing people in besieged areas, leading not only to despair but also to malnutrition, starvation and death.

I called for the Council's support for redoubling efforts enabling the entire international humanitarian system to access people in cut-off and hard-to-reach areas. Today I not only reiterate the call for help; I implore the Council for its assistance. The most powerful tool at the disposal of the United Nations for the prevention and protection of civilians — enshrined in international humanitarian law — is strong, qualitative consensus.

Because the reality is more severe, the situation today is also more severe than when I addressed the Council 10 months ago. More than 4.6 million people, as my colleague noted, are trapped in besieged or hard-to-reach areas, and our food-security analysis suggests that 2.5 million are severely food-insecure inside these areas. Every day we receive alarming reports of a lack of food and water and of acute malnutrition and death. Food security requires not only food but also access to water, sanitation and essential medical treatment. Let us not allow populations in other locations to suffer the same fate as Madaya if they are not already suffering. As I am speaking to the Council now, we estimate that there are 18 besieged areas and close to half a million people cut off from food and other crucial humanitarian assistance. In many of them, people are running out, or may already have run out, of food. We simply do not know. It is just a matter of time before the brutal images we have witnessed these past few weeks hit our screens again. UNICEF and the Ministry of Health have been conducting assessments across the country, and severe cases of acute malnutrition are surfacing in horrendous numbers.

More than half of these places have been besieged for a shocking three years. Some of their populations can be found in parts of rural Damascus where the WFP has not been able to provide food assistance for three years and where we know the price of food is more than double, and sometimes even triple, what it is in Damascus. Moadamiyah borders Damascus city and was one of the most contested locations at the beginning of the crisis. In 2014, a reconciliation agreement was

reached between the Government and armed groups that allowed the first inter-agency convoy to enter Moadamiyah in July of that year. After the agreement was reached, people were able to leave and enter the city through a single checkpoint, carrying small amounts of food for their daily needs. However, unfortunately, the checkpoint was closed in December 2015, and 44,000 people are now besieged inside the city. Directly after the siege was lifted, people rushed to the small shops to buy the food items that were available, and that accelerated the price increases. Many items, such as wheat flour, beans, pasta, lentils, oil and meat, are now available only in very limited quantities. Fruits are unavailable, in fact non-existent. What is most heartbreaking is that this location is a mere 15-minute drive from the WFP's Damascus office, and yet we cannot help.

In Darayya city, where farming has stopped because of the heavy incidence of landmines, we have recorded similar sharp price increases. Most people consume just one meal a day. Together with the international community, the WFP has continued to appeal for access to these and other besieged and hard-to-reach locations. The Council heard from my colleague about the success, or lack of it, we have had with our inter-agency requests. To date, more than 60 per cent of the requests that the WFP has made have simply not received an answer. The meagre number of positive responses we did get were then tied up in bureaucratic procedures that resulted in zero access to these besieged areas throughout 2015. We had recent breakthroughs just this month. They have enabled us to reach a mere 24 per cent of the besieged locations, with one-off support in Idlib governorate, where opposition groups have been blocking assistance to some 12,500 vulnerable Syrians.

I should also note that half the besieged population — an estimated 200,000 people — are trapped inside Deir ez-Zor, which the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) took control of in July 2014. Deir ez-Zor has largely been inaccessible to humanitarian assistance since May of last year. ISIL currently controls most areas of the governorate, while the airport, along with five of the city's neighbourhoods, is under the control of the Syrian Government. It has been reported that ISIL targets the besieged locations on an almost daily basis, resulting in civilian fatalities and injuries. ISIL maintains extremely tight control over these cities, with little prospects for negotiation.

The Damascus highway, the primary road for taking supplies to Deir ez-Zor city, remains closed due to the ongoing conflict, which means that the airport is the only corridor through which to bring in commodities, including food from outside. The WFP has been authorized to airlift into Deir ez-Zor. However, owing to a combination of reasons — the extensive damage that has been done to the runway, a lack of air-space security for our planes and the inability of our staff and partners to distribute — we have been powerless to assist those in need in Deir ez-Zor. At the moment, small commercial airplanes carrying small quantities of food are able to land, but this situation has resulted in the highest price increases in the whole country. The purchasing power of households has consequently dropped to alarming levels, with people's access to food limited as their financial wherewithal for buying food in the markets has been almost erased. In fact, a month's supply of basic food items costs some LS240,000, 10 times what it would be in Damascus.

The truth is, the requirement in resolutions 2165 (2014) and 2139 (2014) that assistance not be impeded or hindered has yet to be fully realized. Despite some local successes, we do not have the access necessary to reach the hungry and those in need. The fact is, our persistent efforts to make gains in besieged and hard-to-reach areas are still thwarted by many obstacles. The physical and logistical challenges often pale in comparison to the numerous checkpoints our vehicles and staff must pass through, the presence of security forces in our warehouses, the burdensome administrative procedures surrounding the loading and sealing of our trucks and the lengthy bilateral negotiations necessary to get facilitation letters signed off on — not to mention the presence of radical armed groups such as ISIL.

The time for fully and collectively implementing the Council's resolutions is long overdue. Access must not be arbitrary, ad hoc or one-time. Effective access must not require unreasonable approvals. It must be reasonably safe, regular, transparent and accountable.

The Council can rest assured that the World Food Programme and its partners will continue to do their utmost to overcome these barriers and hurdles and provide lifesaving assistance. We will continue with our steadfast efforts, exhausting every means at our disposal, reaching every child, woman and man in Syria where we can. Yet we cannot and do not perform alone. Of course, we work with others from the United

Nations country teams and our 40 non-governmental organization partners.

Let me be very clear: to prevent imminent starvation, we need the support and action of every Council member and every Member State. Preventing mass starvation requires more than a four-town agreement. Preventing a humanitarian crisis requires that humanitarian organizations have unimpeded and sustained access in order to deliver immediate relief, including food, to all those in need in Syria. Preventing a humanitarian crisis requires humanitarian pauses and unconditional, monitored ceasefires to enable food and other urgent assistance to be delivered to civilians and to support the necessary vaccination and other health campaigns. Preventing a humanitarian crisis — and a food nutrition security crisis — requires a halt to attacks on civilian infrastructure. Preventing a humanitarian crisis requires ensuring freedom of movement for all civilians and the immediate lifting of all sieges by all parties. That is the only way to end hunger and treat malnutrition, child by child, adult by adult, town by town.

Paulo Coelho has said that the world is changed by our example, not by our opinion. Our responsibility is to ensure that the decisions and choices made in this Chamber become reality on the ground. That is the only way we can save and protect people and enable Syria's next generation to heal.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Executive Director of the World Food Programme for her briefing.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7613

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7613th meeting

Thursday, 28 January 2016, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Bermúdez	(Uruguay)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Xu Zhongsheng
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Faye
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/2016/11)

Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/2016/15)

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16-02093 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/2016/11)

Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/2016/15)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2016/82, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Angola, France, Japan, New Zealand, Spain, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Uruguay.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to documents S/2016/11 and S/2016/15, which contain the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus and the report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus, respectively.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

I should like to inform the Council that the presidency of the Council has met with the representatives of the parties, who have confirmed that they maintain their well-known positions vis-à-vis the item on the Council's agenda. On the basis of those meetings, with the consent of the members of the Council, the presidency has drawn the conclusion that the Council can proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution before it.

If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, China, Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Ukraine, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2263 (2016).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the vote.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Egypt welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2263 (2016), on the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, out of our conviction that the Force is carrying out an important role in supporting stability in Cyprus, particularly in the light of the positive momentum observed in the negotiating process between both Cypriot parties and based on what both parties have expressed with respect to their complete commitment to reaching a comprehensive and sustainable settlement for the Cypriot issue as quickly as possible.

Notwithstanding that, Egypt is convinced that it was important that the thirteenth preambular paragraph of the resolution, indicating the nature and identity of the military bases in the north of Cyprus, be included in order to reflect the reality on the ground. In addition, when dealing with the issue of missing persons, a humanitarian issue of primary importance, it is necessary that all the parties take up their responsibilities in the matter.

Since Egypt stresses the importance of exerting every effort to make the political process succeed, we reiterate that all parties must act responsibly during the negotiations and abstain from any acts that could lead to increased tension or disrupt the positive environment that prevails at present. In that context, Egypt reiterates that the Cypriot settlement must abide by the relevant Security Council resolutions and the current regional political conditions.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation voted in favour of resolution 2263 (2016), on extending the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, which plays an important role in the maintenance of peace and tranquillity on the island. We are in favour of intercommunity relations and negotiations.

However, we note that the document is seriously flawed because the sponsors of the resolution did not heed the opinions of a number of Security Council members, failing to reflect in the text an obvious fact, namely, that beyond the presence in Cyprus

of the two Cypriot communities, there is also one additional player — Turkey — which maintains an enormous military presence on the island and whose true relationship with the settlement of the Cyprus issue is still not clear. This is attested to, for example, by the fact that the Turkish air force regularly violates Cypriot air space. We are convinced that such actions have a negative impact on the atmosphere in which the negotiations are taking place, harm civil aviation in the region and should be curtailed.

We are in favour of the Cypriot parties finding a negotiated solution that is in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of the Security Council resolutions and which would respond to contemporary geopolitical realities. In that context, we note that the existing security mechanisms, namely, systems of external guarantees for Cyprus, are a relic of the colonial era and have no place in the twenty-first century.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom warmly welcomes the renewal of the mandate for the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) through resolution 2263 (2016), unanimously adopted today. As the penholder on this issue, and as one of the largest contributors to UNFICYP, we are pleased that the mission has been extended for another six months. We thank colleagues for their roles in bringing our negotiations to a successful conclusion.

This adoption sends a positive message at a hopeful time for Cyprus. Through resolution 2263 (2016), we have done three main things. First, we have welcomed the progress and the positive momentum in the leaders-led settlement negotiations. Secondly, we have captured the positive developments since the last mandate renewal, including on confidence-building measures. And, thirdly, we have authorized a modest uplift in UNFICYP's force levels to assist the mission in its planning for the hopeful event of a settlement in the near future.

As penholder, the United Kingdom recognizes that there were sensitivities, as evidenced by my Russian colleague's statement. Our efforts during the drafting focused on striking a fine balance on emotive issues, and we believe that the resolution, unanimously adopted, achieved that balance — a balance that allows everyone be sure that no party felt undermined. It draws on language from the Secretary-General's UNFICYP report (S/2016/11). The resolution also has the support of the parties themselves, and we are very glad to note that a significant number of other Council members co-sponsored it.

Finally, there is positive momentum ongoing in the leaders-led settlement negotiations. The Council now needs to assist those leaders to reach agreement. The road ahead will be tough, and the leaders will need to show continued courage to take difficult decisions. In doing so, they will have the full support of the United Kingdom, which is something British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond made clear during his visit last November. But the support of the whole Council will also be vital in making this prospect of a settlement a reality. We have a real opportunity ahead to bring this long-running issue to an overdue conclusion. And let us help the leaders to seize that opportunity.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): The United States fully supports the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. We commend both Cypriot leaders for their determination to make substantial progress towards a comprehensive settlement to end the long-standing division of the island and reunify Cyprus as a bizonal, bicommunal federation.

As the Secretary of State of the United States, Secretary Kerry, recently said at the World Economic Forum, we are committed to supporting "the best chance in decades to achieve a Cyprus settlement". The United States is optimistic that a settlement agreement can be achieved, but we know that this will require the continued persistence of the two leaders, as well as support from the international community, including the Security Council.

It is unfortunate that the remarks of a member of the Council have attempted to politicize this consensus adoption. We urge all Council members to engage on Cyprus free of ulterior political motives driven by external factors, and in the best interest of the Cypriot people.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7614

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7614th meeting

Thursday, 28 January 2016, 10.20 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Bermúdez	(Uruguay)
Members:	Angola	
	China	
	Egypt	
	France	
	Japan	
	Malaysia	
	New Zealand	
	Russian Federation	
	Senegal	
	Spain	
	Ukraine	
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	
	United States of America	
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2016/27)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council. Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

16-02099 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2016/27)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Somalia to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Michael Keating, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia; and Mr. Francisco Caetano José Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Keating and Mr. Madeira, who are joining today's meeting via video-teleconference from Addis Ababa.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2016/27, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on Somalia.

I now give the floor to Mr. Keating.

Mr. Keating: I am delighted to speak to the Security Council so early in my tenure. It is a pleasure to brief the Council alongside Ambassador Madeira, who has been in-post since December 2015 and therefore is an old hand already as compared to me.

Before I start, allow me to pay tribute to my predecessor, Nicholas Kay, who handed over a Mission that is in good shape. All my interlocutors in Mogadishu — Somali and international, African Union and United Nations — have stressed the critical role he and his team played in the past two and a half years.

I would also like to pay tribute to the international community and to the Council, which has played a pivotal role on Somalia for several years. The unity of the Council is a fundamental requirement for progress in Somalia. I look forward to working closely with it.

Let me begin with some first impressions. I was lucky enough to have spent some time in Somalia in my youth, when Mogadishu was thriving, and again in the 1990s, when it was in turmoil. My two weeks as Special Representative of the Secretary-General have not been Somalia's easiest, marked as they have been by tough political negotiations and marred by two horrific terrorist attacks. Yet the Somalia I see today is closer to that of my childhood memory than to that of the nightmare of the civil war. It is a country of enormous potential, of determined people of entrepreneurial spirit, with extraordinary natural resources, a privileged geographic location and a natural gateway. Somalis know their potential, and they will not be deterred from realizing it. In the wake of the terrible attacks at El Aade and Lido beach, their spirit is doubly impressive.

I pay tribute to the bravery and dedication of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and its troops and to the courage of the Somali people. Kenya has vowed not to be deterred by the attack against its soldiers. Equally, Somalis are neither cowed nor deflected from their goals by Al-Shabaab atrocities. That is not to underestimate the challenges ahead. But, as we enter a critical year for the country's transformation, Somalia's steady progress will continue. That will require Somali leadership and the sustained support of the Council. Success in Somalia in 2016 will depend upon managing threats, notably those posed by Al-Shabaab, as well as seizing the opportunities that political progress will bring about.

The security situation remains very challenging. The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission will say more on that. We owe a great debt to the courage and dedication of AMISOM soldiers.

Somalia's security requires a comprehensive approach — a full-spectrum approach, as the Secretary-General indicated in his plan of action for preventing violent extremism. Our political, security, development and human rights efforts must proceed together and reinforce each other.

Military and counter-terrorism efforts need to be accompanied by stronger policing and the rule of law. A priority must be to strengthen federal institutions and regional capabilities within Somalia as the basis for a longer-term transition plan for AMISOM. That

needs to be complemented by work to strengthen institutions, generate jobs in the private sector and reduce dependence upon humanitarian aid.

Security remains a paramount concern. Too many civilians and too many soldiers are dying. Al-Shabaab remains a present threat. I am encouraged by the commitments made on security-sector reform by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud in September 2015, including a comprehensive review of the sector, timely and adequate pay by electronic means and transfer to a unified biometric registration system. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and its partners stand ready to support those important initiatives.

The Federal Government is currently developing a national security policy, which is urgently required. The establishment of a national security architecture must be complemented by the establishment of clear police, justice and corrections models for Somalia in the context of federalism, not least as the basis for coordinated support by international partners. I hope we see progress on that set of issues before the High-level Partnership Forum, to be held next month in Istanbul.

The humanitarian situation remains worrisome. The underlying causes of Somalia's protracted crisis remain unresolved. Millions of children, women and elderly people are acutely vulnerable. In total, some 4.9 million people, representing 40 per cent of the total population, are in need of humanitarian assistance. Over 1.1 million people remain internally displaced. Some 300,000 children under the age of five are acutely malnourished. Millions lack access to basic health care, water and sanitation.

The Somalia humanitarian country team recently launched the humanitarian response plan for 2016 with a total requirement of $885 million to save lives, strengthen livelihoods, improve access to basic services and protect vulnerable groups, including by seeking durable solutions for the internally displaced. The overarching objective is both to meet pressing need, build resilience and reduce dependence on humanitarian aid. It needs to be generously supported.

All our efforts will be conditional upon political progress. Last November, thousands of Somalis across the country, from all walks of life, took part in a national consultative forum. That signalled a decisive step forward towards democracy: transparent and inclusive consultations on an electoral model for 2016, with the active participation of women, youth and minorities. The Mogadishu Declaration of 16 December 2015 outlined key principles, including on term limits, the quality of the electoral process and the participation and representation of women and youth.

It therefore gives me particular pleasure to share some breaking news with the Council. This morning, a decision was taken by the Somali Cabinet on the electoral model to be used later this year. That is the culmination of almost six months of intense consultations. It may be a watershed moment, marking the growing political maturity of a federal Somalia. The Federal Government has taken a bold decision. Leaders of the Somali regions, while many differences and concerns remain, recognize its importance. As I speak, they are engaged in discussions around its implementation.

Reaching a decision on the electoral model was not easy. Following repeated rounds of consultations among Somali leaders, in Kismayo and Mogadishu, and prolonged deadlock, the leaders of the Federal Government recognized that the national interest demands forward momentum. The model envisages that a lower house of 275 members, based on maintenance of the 4.5 power-sharing formula between the clans, and an upper house of 54 members, based on equal representation of the existing, emerging and prospective federal member states and the allocation of additional seats to the pre-existing entities of Puntland and Somaliland. This is a Somali-devised model. It is Somali-led and Somali-owned. Unity among international partners in support of the process leading to that decision has been exemplary. International partners will need to work with Somali stakeholders to ensure its timely implementation. I hope I have the support of the Security Council in that endeavour.

The decision marks an important milestone for Somalia, the Federal Government and the leaders of the federal member states. There are many more ahead. The journey is going to be long and bumpy. Much work remains to be done on the details related to the implementation of the electoral model and to ensure agreement of a political road map for the period from 2016 to 2020, to deliver universal elections by that date. We must navigate around potential obstacles and will face obstructions along the way. Spoiler behaviour will need to be contained. And we must be ready to provide assistance to federal and regional leaders.

Real momentum could and should result from the breakthrough that has been achieved today. That could spur other critical political processes. I welcome the launch of the state formation process in Hiraan and Shabelle Dhexe on 12 January. Once that process is finished and the status of Mogadishu Banadir is clarified, the map of the new, federal Somalia will be complete. Progress has also been made in recent months on the review of the Provisional Federal Constitution. A technical review of 10 of its 15 chapters has been completed, and the major political issues to be addressed are now much clearer.

The federalization process must not just be a top-down, mechanical exercise; to succeed in the long term, it must be an endeavour in which all the people of Somalia have a real stake. There is much left to do to ensure reconciliation and unity. Freedom of expression and opinion has been challenged in recent months, and I call upon the Somali authorities to respect that freedom.

Ambassador Madeira and I are looking forward to strengthening and deepening the working relationship between the United Nations and the African Union on the ground. In line with resolution 2245 (2015), we will convene a senior leadership coordination forum among UNSOM, AMISOM and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) to discuss our strategic and operational priorities. We are committed to taking full advantage of the creation of UNSOS, and the opportunities that affords for greater coherence and effectiveness.

We share a commitment to implementation of the United Nations Human Rights Due Diligence Policy with respect to United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces, which remains an important tool to promote respect for human rights and ensure accountability in a volatile military context. If its are objectives to be met, a strong working partnership with AMISOM, as well as with the individual troop-contributing countries is essential, including to follow up on allegations and ensure accountability. That is in all our interests. Human rights violations will erode the population's support for AMISOM and for the Somali Federal Government.

As I have outlined here, the challenges are manifold. In the coming months I will work with Somali leaders, civil society and the international community to support a comprehensive approach embracing political, security, development and human rights priorities. The exciting thing is that increasingly politics is displacing violence as a means of resolving differences among Somalis. There is an eager desire to advance and leave the suffering and divisions of the past behind.

Let me conclude by saying that the unity of the Security Council and the coherence of the broader international community provides a powerful basis for the United Nations and our African Union partners to make a decisive contribution to Somalia's future. The Council has my commitment and that of the entire United Nations team that we will support the leaders and people of Somalia to realize their goal of a peaceful, prosperous and democratic future.

I hope to achieve more before the high-level partnership forum in Istanbul and look forward to seeing members there in February.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Keating for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Madeira.

Mr. Madeira: I thank you, Mr. President, most sincerely for the opportunity to brief the Security Council alongside the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, my colleague and brother Mr. Michael Keating. I welcome him to Somalia since he has admitted that I am his senior, having arrived there one week earlier than he did. It is my belief that we shall continue to build together on the good working relations already established by our predecessors in the delivery of our shared mandates.

I am briefing the Council barely two weeks after the deadly attack on the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) El-Ade base in the Gedo region and the Lido attack. The attack in Gedo and previous attacks on AMISOM forward operating bases illustrate the continuing threats that we all face in the fight against Al-Shabaab. I pay tribute to all the AMISOM uniformed personnel who continue to exhibit professionalism, tenacity and courage in the campaign to degrade Al-Shabaab's capacity. I would also like to make special mention of the troop- and police-contributing countries. Once again, I would like to express my grief and condolences to the families of all our fallen heroes who have paid the ultimate price not only in the service of Africa but also in the preservation of global peace and security.

My briefing today will focus on the recent security and political developments in Somalia. Since my predecessor last briefed the Council in May 2015 (see S/PV.7445), we have continued to make considerable security gains. AMISOM and the Somali National Army commenced renewed offensive operations, code-named Operation Juba Corridor, in July 2015. These joint operations are currently in their third phase and are expected to be completed by March. The overall strategic objective of the current operations remains to considerably degrade the capabilities of Al-Shabaab in each remaining stronghold. That would provide the enabling environment for the advancement of the much-needed political process.

The dislodging of Al-Shabaab from towns and villages under its control has overstretched AMISOM capacity, with the attendant security implications, which Al-Shabaab is trying to exploit, as the attacks in El-Ade and similar attacks in Lego and Janale suggest. Al-Shabaab has changed tactics by launching a combination of asymmetrical and direct attacks on AMISOM bases. In that regard, we have seen an incremental growth of guerrilla warfare as well as the use of improvised explosive devices in their attacks. Overall, the security situation in Somalia has remained somewhat fluid, volatile and unpredictable in some aspects, despite the territorial gains that we have achieved so far.

On the political front, I am encouraged by the progress that the people and the Government of Somalia continue to make in the state formation process, the revision of their Constitution, and the preparation for the holding of elections later this year. With regard to state formation, earlier this month the Government embarked on the process for the formation of the final regional administration for Hiraan and Shabelle Dhexe, to which my colleague alluded earlier. We welcome that initiative and continue to ask the Federal Government of Somalia to take the necessary steps towards achieving a positive outcome that would lead to the establishment of this last regional administration.

In the area of elections, as expressed jointly with Mr. Keating, we are very pleased that an electoral model was unanimously agreed by the Government just yesterday, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General just mentioned. That model is based on a unique balance of representation between clan and constituency and offers a hopeful outlook for an inclusive electoral process. I continue to urge the Council and other partners to support the Federal Government of Somalia in the effective implementation of this electoral model.

Based on the declared principles and time frame of the election, I would like to commend the Federal Government of Somalia for reaffirming its commitment to respecting the constitutionally mandated terms of the legislature and the executive, which expire in August and September, respectively. This is consistent with the African Union Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. While the political progress made is laudable, much more needs to be done in the consolidation of this process, as well as in the rejuvenation of the constitutional review process, which remains a critical pillar of political stability in Somalia.

I would like to reassure the Council that the African Union (AU) remains committed to supporting peace and stability in Somalia amid the immense sacrifices made and challenges that the Mission continues to face. In that regard, I should like to urge the Council to consider strengthening our partnership in the following areas in order to further enhance the implementation of the AMISOM mandate.

First, I would like to emphasize that the Somali National Army is central to the conduct of joint operations with AMISOM, as well as to taking over security functions in the recovered areas in order to facilitate continued offensive operations. It is also of note that the only viable process that will lead to the achievement of the AMISOM mandate in Somalia and its subsequent exit strategy is the standing-up of a capable, legitimate and inclusive Somali National Army. In the same vein, I urge the Council to ensure that the pledges made towards the Guulwade Plan are fulfilled. The international community also needs to be better coordinated in its support for Somali security forces and otherwise.

Secondly, I would like to stress that better coordination between the multiplicity of partners — and specifically among AMISOM, the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) — remains vital now more than ever before. The Council will recall that resolution 2245 (2015), adopted on 9 November 2015, underscored the need to ensure operational effort and cooperation between UNSOM and AMISOM so that they are aligned with a common set of strategic priorities. Under the new leadership of Mr. Keating and

myself, we are hopeful that there will be progress in the strengthening and revitalization of the joint senior leadership decision-making framework, and we are already working on that. I also look forward to the joint development of the quantitative compact between the Head of UNSOS and myself, which is expected to enhance the provision of support to AMISOM. Our recent interactions with the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support on the provision of timely and flexible support to AMISOM has been very positive and encouraging.

Thirdly, the provision of additional enablers remains central to AMISOM operations. It will be recalled that the Governments of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda have pledged helicopters to AMISOM. However, the tripartite letters of assist between those troop-contributing countries, the AU and the United Nations remain outstanding. We would like to urge the Council to request the Secretary-General to facilitate an expedited negotiation process that takes into account the unique nature of AMISOM's offensive mandate. That would allow for the deployment of those assets, which are urgently required to boost the operational tempo of AMISOM and to dislodge Al-Shabab from some places throughout Mogadishu.

Fourthly, the AU is committed to improving AMISOM's strategy in Somalia. I am pleased to report to the Council that the AU is currently organizing a summit for troop-contributing countries, which is expected to lead to a political commitment by the various stakeholders on how to address, among other issues, command and control, the provision of additional enablers and enhanced overall coordination. The summit will take place in due course later this year.

Finally, the decision of the European Union (EU) to cut the allowances to the uniformed personnel of the Mission by 20 per cent, starting this January, has caused great concern. The African Union Commission is making every effort to fill the gap created by the EU decision. In that regard, the AU recently appointed Mr. Donald Kaberuka as the High Representative for the African Union Peace Fund, responsible for the mobilization of additional resources for AU peace support operations. Immediate steps are also being taken to generate additional funds for AMISOM. However, that is occurring in the context of an economic downturn owing to the drastic decrease in commodity prices. Hence, I would like to urge the Council to consider various funding mechanisms that would sustain the current support for AMISOM, including through increased financial support by the United Nations, individual Council members and other relevant stakeholders, in the interest of global peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Madeira for his briefing.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7615

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7615th meeting
Friday, 29 January 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Bermúdez	(Uruguay)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Xu Zhongsheng
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Japan	Mr. Yoshikawa
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Security Council mission

Briefing by Security Council mission to Africa (21-23 January 2016)

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16-02266 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council mission

Briefing by Security Council mission to Africa (21-23 January 2016)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

At today's meeting, the Security Council will be briefed by the representatives of Egypt and France, two of the co-leaders of the Security Council mission to Africa that took place from 21 to 23 January.

I now give the floor to the representative of France, who will brief us on the Security Council's visit to Burundi.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): On 21 and 22 January, the Security Council visited Burundi for the second time in less than a year, following the trip we organized under the French presidency of the Council in March 2015. As one of the organizers of the mission, along with the United States and Angola, I have the honour, as is customary, to give the Council an informational briefing on our visit to Burundi. The representative of Egypt, who oversaw the African Union segment of the Council's visit, on 23 January, will brief us on the visit to Addis Ababa. I will then make a few remarks in my national capacity.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat for the significant efforts it made to organize this visit, enabling us to do it under good conditions and make it as productive as possible. I would also like to thank the Burundian officials and others whom we met with there for making themselves available to us.

The visit falls into the category of follow-up on the situation in Burundi, which continues to be a matter of considerable concern to the Council. To start with, I should note that the Security Council adopted resolution 2248 (2015) on 12 November and a presidential statement (S/PRST/2015/18) on 28 October and made a press statement on 19 December 2015; those served as terms of reference and a guide for the messages the Security Council wanted to convey to its interlocutors during the visit. Essentially, the Council emphasized the vital importance of refraining from any form of violence, strengthening the political dialogue that began on 28 December 2015, protecting the people by ensuring better respect for human rights and improving relations with the international community, whether as represented by the East African Community, the African Union or the United Nations.

The Council first met with a group that included two elder statesmen, former Chairs of the United Nations Expert Panel on the Regional Peace Initiative in Burundi, and we were able to fully come to grips on the importance of full compliance with both the letter and the spirit of the terms of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for finding a solution to the current situation in Burundi. The Security Council delegation then met with the Burundi representative of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, who gave us a thorough account of the situation in Burundi and went over the negative developments of the past few months.

We sat down with representatives of civil society, whose accounts testified to their defiance of the Burundian authorities, particularly the security forces, and to the clear and urgent need for protection by the international community. The Council also met with various independent media representatives, who described the very difficult conditions under which they are still attempting to conduct their professional activities; with various representatives of the political opposition, including in the National Assembly and the Government, from whom we heard quite pointed criticism; and with members of the so-called radical opposition, not represented in the official institutions, who painted a very gloomy picture of the political and security situation. In their view, genocide was either already happening in Burundi or was about to.

We also had the opportunity to talk to three of the principal members of the Burundian authorities, who, unlike those whom I have just cited, who described serious political and security problems, gave us a very upbeat and optimistic picture of the current situation. We held a meeting with Burundi's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Alain Nyamitwe, to discuss the political and security aspects of the current situation and Burundi's relations with various elements of the international community — the East African Community, the African Union and the United Nations. Burundi's First Vice-President, Gaston Sindimwo, received us in his home for an exchange of views on the security and

political situation and relations between Burundi and the international community.

Finally, Mr. Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic, hosted a discussion with the Security Council at his residence in Gitega. After he had heard what the Council had to say, he went over recent developments in Burundi with a positive and hopeful spin on the current situation in the country. He said that as far as he was concerned, the reports we have been seeing in the international media were wrong. He welcomed the fact that the dialogue in Kampala had been resumed on 28 December, considering that in his view only the Head of State of Uganda was in a position to support the inter-Burundian process under way. President Nkurunziza again reiterated his firm opposition to any interference from outside, in particular from the African Union. He thanked the Council for its attention to Burundi over the years and said that he was fully prepared to continue to maintain good relations with the United Nations.

The Council then travelled to Ethiopia to meet with the African Union, and I will hand that part over to my Egyptian colleague, with the understanding that it is clear that the Council has lessons to draw from our trip to Burundi in the light of the decisions that the regional actors will be making very soon. Before my colleague takes the floor, I would like to make a few brief comments in my national capacity.

As the Council knows, France has been following the situation in Burundi closely and with great concern. Since the crisis began we have been calling on all the parties involved to halt the violence and begin a dialogue aimed at reaching a consensus solution that respects the Arusha Agreement, which now more than ever constitutes the compass both for us and for all the stakeholders in Burundi. France immediately suspended its defence and security cooperation with Burundi, and the African Union, the East African Community and the Ugandan mediators have also been working on the issue. France has given its full support to encouraging efforts to open an inclusive dialogue with the African mediation and has advocated for the adoption of European sanctions against three of the people close to power and one member of the armed opposition, in order to increase the pressure on the parties involved. Consultations between the European Union and the Burundian authorities began at the beginning of December. In Geneva, the European Union got the Human Rights Council to request that the High Commissioner for Human Rights assess the situation. The statements made by various sectors of the population have given rise to fears that the situation is worsening, and France and its partners have given the authorities and the radical opposition clear warnings.

On France's initiative, as I said, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2248 (2015), condemning the violence and urging all the parties to open a dialogue, on pain of sanctions. The resolution also calls for strengthening the United Nations presence in Burundi. France will continue to support the African initiatives in Addis Ababa, Geneva and Brussels. Lastly, we were concerned to learn of the arrest in Burundi of a French journalist, Jean-Philippe Rémy, and a British photographer, Philip Moore. We call on the Burundian authorities to release them immediately, with the understanding that diplomatic efforts are under way to that end.

As I said, the fact that we have had to visit Burundi for the second time in less than a year is testament to the Council's concern and involvement and is a necessary stage in that involvement. We should bear in mind that we will put together all the lessons there are to be learned from the visit and, in the light of the outcome of the African Union Summit, we should shoulder our responsibility to break the cycle of violence, encourage the launch of a genuinely inclusive inter-Burundian dialogue and ensure full respect for human rights in Burundi.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of France for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt, who will inform us about the Security Council's visit to the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt): At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation for the confidence vested in Egypt by the members of the Council in asking us to take part in the preparations for this important mission.

As members are aware, the Council decided to take the opportunity of its stopover in Addis Ababa on 23 January to hold an informal dialogue with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU). The purpose of the dialogue was for the two Councils to exchange views on a number of issues of common interest, namely, the situations in Burundi and in Somalia. Although our time in Addis Ababa was brief, we were able to engage in a substantive and useful dialogue with our African partners. In that regard,

I would like to thank the Secretariat, as well as the United Nations Office to the African Union, for their valuable support in the preparations for that stopover. I also wish to thank the AU Commission, the Office of the Permanent Observer for the African Union to the United Nations in New York for their contributions and the Ethiopian Government for its hospitality.

The activities of Council members commenced in Addis Ababa with a briefing from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union, Mr. Haile Menkerios. During that meeting, Council members shared the key messages they delivered during their visit to Burundi, as well as their views on the meetings they held with the various interlocutors. Special Representative Menkerios expressed his views on the situation and provided valuable insights into the AU position, the dynamics within the Peace and Security Council and the broader regional context.

The meeting with the Special Representative also provided an opportunity for the Security Council to reflect on the situation in Somalia, particularly the political process and the upcoming elections, the security challenges facing the country and the continuing terrorist threat posed by Al-Shabaab. The discussion also addressed issues pertaining to the cooperation between the AU and the United Nations in support of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The informal dialogue between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council was lively and interactive, with most members of the two Councils constructively engaged. The participation by the Head of the United Nations Office and the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security also provided important insights.

In that connection, before I move on to the highlights of the discussions, I would like to extend my thanks to Uruguay for co-presiding over the dialogue, and to France and the United Kingdom for initiating the discussions on the situations in Burundi and Somalia, respectively. I also want to point out that the holding of that informal dialogue was an important step. All participants welcomed its significance in strengthening cooperation on issues of mutual interest.

With regard to Burundi, many participants stressed the urgency of addressing the situation and pre-empting any possibilities of further deterioration, and called for concerted efforts from all regional and international partners to that end. Members of both Councils also agreed on the priority that must be given to the restoration of security and the initiation of a genuine and inclusive national dialogue, which could lead to a consensual political solution to the current situation. In that connection, members of both Councils expressed support for the regional mediation efforts led by Uganda on behalf of the East African Community. At the same time, Council members expressed concern at the slow progress of the mediation. They were interested in hearing the views of the Peace and Security Council on the nature of the United Nations engagement in support of the regional mediation efforts, through the role of the Special Envoy of the Secretary General and the United Nations support team deployed to Burundi.

Discussions also focused on the need for supporting the restoration of security and the provision of adequate protection for civilians in Burundi. The envisaged deployment of 100 AU human rights and military observers was of great interest. The deployment of those observers would provide better monitoring of the situation and represent a constructive point of entry in engaging the Government of Burundi.

In addition, several members of the Peace and Security Council called for the adoption of a Chapter VII draft resolution by the Security Council authorizing the deployment of an African prevention and protection mission in Burundi. In contrast, several members expressed strong views that the deployment of such a mission without the consent of the Government of Burundi would be counterproductive and ineffective. Council members walked out of the informal dialogue with a sense of confidence that the Peace and Security Council was determined to make every effort to address the situation in Burundi. The upcoming AU Summit in Addis Ababa on 29 January will represent a crucial venue for generating a regional political strategy that the Security Council would be able to support.

On Somalia, the two Councils heard presentations by the representatives of the United Kingdom and Ethiopia. Through those presentations, the two Councils noted that 2016 promises to be a defining year for the country, and that a need exists for continued engagement with stakeholders in Somalia with the aim of organizing transparent and credible elections. The two presentations welcomed the progress under way in the implementation of Somalia's Vision 2016 and reached the same conclusion, namely, that the Somali stakeholders should be encouraged to reach an

agreement on an election model for elections to be held this year and without further delay.

The two speakers raised concerns about the continued threat posed by the Al-Shabaab terrorist group to peace and security in the region. They also commended the role of AMISOM, while expressing hope that the newly established United Nations Support Office in Somalia would facilitate continued and more effective United Nations support to AMISOM. In addition, the representative of Ethiopia voiced the AU's concern about the financial challenges facing the Mission. He stated that AMISOM was operating in the most difficult and dangerous of environments, implementing a Security Council mandate, the organ with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Security Council, I should like to express my appreciation to all the members of the Council and to the Secretariat who participated in the mission for the manner in which they discharged their important responsibilities. In particular, I would like to highlight the logistical and organizational arrangements that facilitated that mission.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7616

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7616th meeting
Friday, 29 January 2016, 10.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Rosselli	(Uruguay)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Xu Zhongsheng
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Japan	Mr. Yoshikawa
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Yoshikawa (Japan): Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on a successful presidency of the Security Council. It is my honour to be the first speaker to share observations about this month as a newly elected member. Japan welcomes today's formal wrap-up session. We also welcome your initiative, Sir, to hold an informal session this afternoon, which will allow us to have an interactive dialogue with the broader membership of the United Nations. As this session is in open format, let me suggest to you, Elbio, to start this afternoon's informal session with questions and answers.

Let me first touch upon the working methods of the Council. I would like to remind all Council members that in presidential note S/2010/507, of which I have a copy with me, all participants in Security Council meetings are encouraged, in paragraph 29, to deliver their statements in five minutes or less. Making a short statement is not easy. Winston Churchill once said, "If I had more time, I would have written a shorter letter". Let me try to follow the five-minute rule.

The Security Council has dealt with many difficult issues during the month of January. Among them, I would like to concentrate on the nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 6 January. The test was a clear violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and the international non-proliferation regime. It also constitutes a grave security threat that undermines peace and security in the region and beyond. On the day of the nuclear test, the Security Council immediately held emergency consultations upon a request by Japan, the United States and the Republic of Korea. The Security Council was united in issuing a press statement right after the meeting, which strongly condemned the test and decided to begin working immediately on further significant measures in a new draft resolution of the Security Council.

As one of the proponents of the emergency meeting, let me express our appreciation for the cooperation of all Council members. After the very swift reaction by the Council, informal discussions have been conducted towards a new draft resolution. We would like to commend the efforts led by the United States, which holds the pen. Japan believes that adopting a new draft resolution with further significant measures needs to be the top, urgent priority of the Council.

Sanctions under the Charter of the United Nations are not a punishment or the final objective. Rather, sanctions are one of the important tools that the Council has at its disposal to bring about a comprehensive solution to the issue in question. We agree that in order to bring about a solution to the issue there has to be dialogue. But we should also be reminded that we have been engaged in dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for more than 20 years on their nuclear development programme. Also, past agreements and dialogues have not succeeded in bringing about a solution. Those agreements include the 1994 Agreed Framework, the Pyongyang declaration between Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 2002 and the Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks in 2005 — just to mention a few. But none of those attempts worked, as promises by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were not kept. In order for dialogue to work, there has to be pressure at the same time. That is the very reason that we are arguing for a new, robust draft resolution.

In stark contrast to the grave challenge posed to the non-proliferation regime by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the international community witnessed a positive development with regard to the Iranian nuclear issue, namely, the advent, on 16 January, of the implementation day of resolution 2231 (2015). As a result, United Nations sanctions related to Iran's nuclear programme were lifted. That is clear proof that sanctions do work.

Before concluding my statement, Mr. President, I would like to commend you and the entire Uruguayan team for your incredible work. It must have been a big challenge for Uruguay to assume the presidency in its very first month on the Council. Having been on the Council with you for one month, Sir, I have learned a

tremendous amount from your effective and professional conduct of the presidency. I wish Ambassador Rafael Darío Ramírez Carreño and Venezuela every success in the month of February.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): I, too, want to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on the very efficient and effective manner in which you and your team have managed our work during the past month, which has been a very busy one. I also want to commend the new members. I was very impressed at the way that all of them immediately became very active, engaged and efficient in our work.

It is very good to have this wrap-up session, two sessions, in fact, as the Ambassador of Japan has mentioned, as we are having a formal session here today — and there have been requests from the wider membership for more of these formal wrap-ups — and, I am pleased to note, we are also going to continue the recent tradition of an informal wrap-up, this afternoon.

Here in the Chamber we tend to speak from prepared texts because we are stating the positions of our Governments on the important issues of the day. But I am not using a prepared text, other than a few scrappy notes, because I want to focus on another aspect of our work here today. I think that the Council does very well in stating its positions nationally, but it does not do so well in what I see as its core business, which is problem-solving. We need to spend more time talking to each other about how we solve the problems on our agenda, and less time stating our positions for the record. I think that is an issue that New Zealand will continue to promote for the remainder of our time here on the Council. Taking that perspective, I want to address two issues that came up on our agenda this month.

The first is the issue of Burundi. I would like to thank France and Egypt for their very accurate reports and summations (see S/PV.7615) of the conversations we had in Bujumbura and with the African Union Peace and Security Council in Ethiopia. It was a great relief to New Zealand that we finally managed to get the trip to Burundi under way. It was something we had asked for over six months ago. It was a disappointing trip in lots of ways. We found it very difficult to engage with the Government of Burundi on the issues because, as we heard from the representative of France, the perspectives of the Government, on the one side, and the opposition, on the other, were so very different. It is hard to have a conversation when you have such different views of life. On the other hand, it was very important that we went there. I think that was a very important demonstration of the Council's concern.

I was very pleased with the conversations in Addis Ababa, where I think we had a really good engagement with the African Peace and Security Council — a very frank discussion with them about the challenges we face. I came away from that meeting convinced that the only way we will make progress on this issue is if the Security Council and the African Peace and Security Council and the East African Community all work together. We cannot afford to be divided. I really welcome that engagement, which I think is something we should be making more of.

The second issue I want to talk about today is Syria, which has dominated a lot of our time on the Council. First I want to pay tribute to Spain, our collaborator on the Syrian humanitarian file, as well as to welcome Egypt, which is joining us now on this very difficult set of issues. In this case we had another example where the world responded when something really graphically grim was put in front of us, that is, the starvation in Madaya — a little like the drowned boy on the Turkish beach. We all rushed to respond in a very dramatic way. But we should have been doing that much earlier. Again, this is a classic failure of the international community and of the Council in responding to information we knew was there but we had not grabbed the issue or acted quickly enough.

I was reminded of being here in the Chamber 20 years ago when we knew what was happening in Rwanda. But it was only when the cameras got to Goma and saw the refugee situation there that we actually got an international response. Again, it was months too late. We need to be much better at grabbing these issues, working with them and not just waiting for the television cameras to spur us into action.

Those are the thoughts that I wanted to contribute today. I wish to thank the members of the Council for being such excellent colleagues.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I could not agree more with the opening comment by the Ambassador of Japan, specifically the quotation from Churchill and the five minutes. It is a topic I am obsessed with, I must admit. We talk too much, with not many initiatives carried to success. We do not implement things properly.

For that reason, if I may, allow me to mention that in the last open debate in which we spoke on working methods (see S/PV.7516), Spain carried out a new but important exercise, namely, gathering the opinions of the broader membership. Those views were reflected in a document that I circulated among all members. I think those are good working methods — when we speak little in the Chamber and yet take full advantage of what was actually said in the Chamber.

Since this is the first wrap-up session since August 2015, and so I therefore feel I can speak about what has happened between August and today. I quite agree with Mr. Gerard van Bohemen that it is better to improvise with certain ideas and to share reflections, rather than to give a lengthy account of everything that has happened. I would like to differentiate between where I think the Council has had success and conducted itself well and where I think it needs to improve. I think that, since August, the Council has conducted itself very well in many cases, especially in two.

The first was in the adoption of resolution 2242 (2015), on women and peace and security. I do not simply say that because it was adopted during the Spanish presidency of the Council, but because, working very well with the United Kingdom, and starting with very wide-ranging positions among those at the table, we were able reach overall consensus on a very ambitious and important text that, among toher things, sets up an informal working group that will enable the implementation of resolution 2242 (2015) to become an actual reality.

The second area where I think the Council was successful was the nuclear agreement with Iran. I say that because I had the weighty responsibility to be the facilitator of the new mechanism established in resolution 2231 (2015), which presupposes major efforts from the Spanish Mission as facilitator, as well as for the Secretariat and other institutions. Let me say that it is my intention to hold an open briefing to all Members of the United Nations no later than within the next two weeks, so that the membership can properly understand how the new mechanism is going to operate when it comes to commercial relations with Iran. I will make a very general announcement.

On the negative side of things, in the first place, we obviously have the question of Syria. When it comes to Syrian policy, we have not been able to put an end to the war there. We have our fingers crossed that the meetings in Geneva today will conclude successfully. They have not begun as we would have hoped, but they have begun anyway. On the humanitarian front in Syria, although it is a real pleasure to work with Gerard and with our friend Amr from Egypt, unfortunately, we cannot give ourselves good marks, as the humanitarian statistics are becoming increasingly worse. For that reason, the three of us have come up with mechanisms to ensure that there are no more Madayas, as well as to improve the response levels of the Syrian Government to requests from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Those are two important priorities.

On the chemical weapons front, that is working well because very soon we will be getting the first results from the Joint Investigative Mechanism. That leads me to mention at this important forum that we are in the middle of an important process of reviewing resolution 1540 (2004), which will conclude in December. My goal in that review process, with the help of Council members, is to ensure that resolution 1540 (2004) is sufficiently effective to truly halt the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors.

In my notes, on the negative side, there is also Burundi. In that context, let me say that, although the results of the Council's trip were not what we expected, I will say the Council has performed well, insofar as we managed to carry out a trip at an important time to prevent a situation we all fear. I think we should be satisfied with our conduct in that regard. Results, however, are a different matter.

There are various other initiatives that have gone very well. I will just touch on resolution 2261 (2016), on Colombia, which shows that States have trust in the Security Council. That is an important matter. I would mention as well as the important resolution 2249 (2015), on combating terrorism, as well as resolution 2253 (2015), on the financing of terrorism.

To conclude, so as not to exceed my five minutes, Mr. President, I congratulate you for the excellent work you have done in the Council in your first month. I also commend you for following the tradition we began a few months ago with Toledo-style wrap-up sessions, such as the one that will take place at 3 o'clock today. Such sessions make it possible to have a more informal exchange on the opinions about our work with the wider membership of the United Nations.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to begin by warmly thanking you and your

entire team, Mr. President, for the sustained efforts throughout Uruguay's presidency of the Security Council during the month of January. I also wish to say just how much we appreciate your foresight in recognizing the Council's priorities, your high degree of professionalism in easing the Council's work and your team's keenness to communicate with everyone. I also welcome the initiative to convene this wrap-up session on the Council's work in the month of January, a month during which the Council dealt with a particularly hectic schedule and extremely important issues that have a direct impact on peace and security.

During the past few weeks, the international challenges proved to be particularly complex, which demanded fortitude and cooperation going forward. Given those challenges — Israel's persistent occupation of Palestinian territory, the exacerbation of the risk and dangers of terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, political and humanitarian crises that are spreading from Syria to Central Africa to Yemen, the many challenges facing West Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, the issues of Cyprus and of Haiti, the support for the historic peace accords in Colombia, and now, our responsibility to protect civilians during conflict — all these issues fall to the responsibility vested in the Security Council to tackle challenges to international peace and security.

Egypt, during previous meetings of the Council, has spoken on critical issues. For that reason, I will focus solely on the mission of the Council to Burundi as a model for analysing the work of the Council in effectively tackling crises on our agenda and to say that the strength of the Council lies in its shared vision and joint action in tackling such crises. As far as we are concerned, the mission can be counted as among the major achievements of the Council this month, given that it represented genuine engagement with a crisis that requires our close and timely attention because it is of concern to the international community and because of the reality of the situation and the means available to resolve it. That was a visit that enabled the Security Council to directly come to grips with the reality on the ground. We were able to sit down and speak with a wide array of national stakeholders. We held discussions with those in charge of various spheres of life in Burundi and came away from that with several positive indicators that we then took to the Burundian leaders, to say that they needed to strengthen their actions.

The message, therefore, on the part of the Security Council to the President of Burundi could be considered as one of the direct outcomes of that visit. The informal dialogue with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union also helped us to come up with a comprehensive approach, and we also had other means of better understanding the political and security situation. I have full confidence that the members of the Council came back with a deeper understanding with what has taken place on the ground and a clearer vision as to the options available to us.

Mr. Seck (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for holding this monthly wrap-up session, which affords us to look back on the issues and the work undertaken by the Security Council in the period under consideration, making it possible to chart a course for future meetings. In that regard, allow me to commend the leadership and wisdom that you have shown throughout your outstanding presidency of the Security Council.

The glimmers of hope that have come from the regularly held and peaceful elections in West Africa, the establishment of a national unity Government in Libya, significant progress in the Côte d'Ivoire towards a successful transition and the positive course of talks in Colombia and Cyprus have partly offset the particularly disastrous humanitarian effects and myriad consequences of the violence in Syria, the lethargy of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and the continuation of terrorist attacks throughout nearly the entire world. We are fortunate, Sir, that you called for two important open debates on the ministerial level (see S/PV.7606 and S/PV.7610) — on the protection of civilians and on the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine — which afforded us a deeper understanding to more efficiently direct our action.

The report of the Regional Office for West and Central Africa illustrates how, through preventive, proactive and better coordinated diplomacy and with the support of the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations can make conflict prevention a reality. From Nigeria to Togo to Burkina Faso to the Republic of Guinea and to Côte d'Ivoire, successful elections have attested to the continued and tenacious engagement on the part of the Economic Community of West African States — which my country has the honour of chairing — and the ideals of peace, democracy, liberty and the rule of law. That positive impetus deserves to

be supported and strengthened with a view to future elections in many countries in the subregion.

Another example of the positive results coming out of your presidency, Sir, was the unanimous co-sponsoring and adoption of resolution 2261 (2016), through which the Council, following the request on the part of the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, decided to create a special political mission to monitor the peace process under way and the surrendering of weapons, after the conclusion of a final agreement to a conflict that has lasted nearly 50 years. That mission reflects the commitment of the parties to negotiated solutions and attests to the immense hope invested in the United Nations, which the Senegalese delegation strives to maintain. The same can be said of the formation of a national accord Government in Libya and of the positive events that we have seen driven by the Cypriot, Greek and Turkish communities with the view to resuming peace negotiations, with the support of the United Nations.

Those significant advances on the path to peace, however, must not hide the sad reality that millions of civilians are living in disarray Africa and in the Middle East. In that respect, allow me to dwell on several of those situations.

The litany of terrorist attacks that occurred this month shows the acuity if not the scale of a phenomenon against which we continue to fight untiringly, but it also represents the greatest threat to our security and the ideals that constitute a model world. That leads me to reiterate the overriding need to effectively implement the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel with a view to a pre-emptive holistic approach, which is the only approach capable of reaching lasting solutions. As we have heard at length, that applies to the situation in the Middle East, on which I will not dwell.

With regard to the Horn of Africa and the difficult situation in Somalia, on which we held rather intense consultations yesterday, I would like to relaunch the appeal that I made then for the international community, individual States and international organizations to continue their financial support at this critical moment in Somalia's history. We are now seeing positive signs, particularly with regard to the electoral process and the progressive return of Somali expatriates — who are investing and believing in the future of their country — all of which are elements that merit the support of the international community.

Lastly, to in conclusion, I would like to express to you, Sir, how pleased the delegation of Senegal is to participate at your side and, especially during the open debate on the protection of civilians, which remains the very essence of the commitment of Senegalese troops in theatres of operation as they try to bring about security throughout the world. I assure you of the full cooperation of the Senegalese delegation on that issue. We also eagerly await the Venezuelan presidency,

Mr. Ibrahim (Malaysia): Echoing Churchill's remarks, I too would like to say that if I had had the time, I would have prepared a shorter statement. I join other Security Council members in congratulating you, Mr. President, and the delegation of Uruguay for having successully lead the Council during the productive month of January, despite having only just recently assumed membership of the Council. The excellent manner in which you expertly steered the Council's work this past month is indeed commendable.

It is noteworthy that the last the time the Council met in this formal wrap-up format (see S/PV.7516 we had just adopted presidential statement S/PRST/2015/15, which concerns the situation in Syria and outlines proposals for the implementation of the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex). Since then, the Council has made further strides in addressing the Syrian conflict, most notably with the adoption of several key outcomes last December. In January, we assessed the implementation of those decisions, particularly in resolution 2258 (2015). In our assessment, while limited access for humanitarian relief and supplies had been secured for Madaya, Kafraya and Zabadani, parties to the conflict, especially the Government, must do more to address the dire humanitarian situaion of Syrian civilians in other besieged and hard-to-reach areas. We strongly reiterate the call upon all parties to allow and facilitate the movement and provision of humanitarian relief, particularly across lines of combat. It is only humane and right to do so. The concept of medical neutrality, highlighted by Spain during the open debate on the protection of civilians held on 19 January (see S/PV.7606), seems particularly relevant in this regard. We look forward with interest to reading about the further development of the concept.

Looking a bit further back, to the end of 2015, strong and action-oriented outcomes were adopted, including on Burundi, Libya and South Sudan, as well as on thematic issues such as counter-terrorism and women and peace and security, inter alia.

We have just now heard a briefing by the co-leaders on the Council's visit to Burundi last week. I wish to emphasize the point that Burundi must realize that the Council's desire is to seek a better and more secure and predictable future, and to address the current insecurity issues through political inclusiveness and dialogue. We therefore share the co-leaders' assessment, particularly on the need for the Government to do more to restore public confidence and in maintaining security and law and order for all segments of society in the country.

As demonstrated by the many significant decisions taken during the past month or so, when Council members demonstrated significant flexibility and goodwill, we were able to come together to effectively discharge the mandate of maintaining international peace and security. We should continue to build on this positive momentum.

Such solidarity was again demonstrated in the Council's swift and unified response to the nuclear-test detonations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea earlier this month. Malaysia reiterates its condemnation of the test detonation, which we consider to be an unwarranted provocation that could threaten peace and security in the Korean peninsula and in the wider region. The test violates international norms against nuclear testing, to which all responsible members of the international community are committed.

We also welcome once again the possibility of advancing or achieving closure with respect to the long-running conflict in Colombia. We congratulate the parties, the grantors, the accompanying countries and other partner stakeholders for their tireless efforts towards peace in Colombia. We look forward to working on operationalizing the special political mission established by resolution 2261 (2016), which will form part of the tripartite mechanism to monitor and verify the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities between the parties.

The Council also saw noteworthy and positive developments on the Iran nuclear issue. In January, implementation day of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between Iran and its international partners, prescribed under resolution 2231 (2015), has arrived, and we welcome the lifting of United Nations and other sanctions against Iran. We urge Iran to continue to work closely with the International Atomic Energy Agency and other relevant partners to remove all lingering doubts as to the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.

In the light of such positive developments, we would also encourage Iran to continue deepening dialogue and cooperation with its regional partners aimed at addressing the scourge of terrorism and the various conflicts in the Middle East region.

Notwithstanding the very useful interactive informal briefings held at the end of the past few months, Malaysia continues to believe in the utility and value of these formal wrap-up sessions. As such, we are pleased that Uruguay has decided to hold this formal wrap-up session and the informal briefing later this afternoon, reflecting the views expressed by elected Council members which had served earlier, as well as the sentiments of the wider United Nations membership. Malaysia is of the view that formal note 507 briefings such as this one should become a fixed item on the Council's programme of work, particularly for the month of December. Among other reasons, formal wrap-ups in December would provide outgoing elected Council members with the opportunity to place on record views and reflections on the Council's membership. At the same time, it would also afford an opportunity for the Council as a whole to reflect on and assess its performance over the past year. This would be an important exercise in transparency and inclusivity on the part of the Council.

While recognizing that the scheduling of Council meetings, including the formal wrap-ups, is the prerogative of the presidency during any given month, we will be consulting closely with all Council members in taking this proposal forward.

On that note, I conclude by wishing ambassador Rafael Ramírez Carreño and the entire Venezuelan delegation all the best in taking up the Council's presidency for February, which we believe will be equally fulfilling and productive.

Ms. Sison (United States of America): On this last working day of the first month of the year, it is a good time to take stock and look ahead to the issues that we will need to focus on in February and beyond. I would like to take this opportunity to talk about three top priorities, Syria, Burundi and North Korea, and also to say a few words at the end about an aspect of our working methods.

First, on Syria, the world has truly been shocked at the appalling conditions and starvation in Madaya — images of suffering with which we are now only too familiar. While the Council repeatedly discussed the situation in Madaya over the past few weeks and raised the alarm about the need for more assistance, especially medical care, we still face obstruction by the regime and ruthlessness on the part of the forces on the ground, which prevent the people of Madaya from getting what they need. And as we know now, Madaya offers us only a glimpse of the terrible suffering that is taking place in communities across Syria. Earlier this week, during its briefing to the Council (see S/PV/7612), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs noted that it had increased the number of besieged areas in Syria from 15 to 18, and the number of people in those besieged communities from 393,700 to 486,700. That is an increase of more than 90,000 people trapped without access to humanitarian assistance. With all the major indicators going in the wrong direction, we simply must find a more effective way to change the humanitarian situation on the ground. Especially in the face of this horrendous situation, it is all the more important that the peace process move forward, and we strongly support Special Envoy De Mistura in his continuing efforts to convene the parties in Geneva.

On Burundi, after much negotiation and difficult planning, we managed to start the year with a trip, on which we found an extremely tense and dangerous situation. We heard from civil-society members who had witnessed murder and from women who spoke about sexual violence and rape. Local journalists pleaded for the freedom to report, and the United Nations briefed us on reports of mass graves and ethnic violence. We urge the Government of Burundi to conduct a serious dialogue with all stakeholders, including the armed opposition. In terms of next steps, we are closely following the African Union (AU) Heads of State Summit set to take place this weekend. We heard from the AU Peace and Security Council that it is determined to ensure that the force of 5,000 that it has already authorized is accepted in Burundi and then actually deployed. Action is needed.

On North Korea, as we said in our press statement, the Council strongly condemned the nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 6 January, which is a clear threat to international peace and security. In that statement, we recalled the need to take further significant measures, and we now must impose real consequences. Our agenda is packed with many other priorities.

We had a positive moment just last Monday, when we adopted resolution 2261 (2016), on Colombia, the Security Council's response to the joint call made by the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia for United Nations engagement to help end the conflict. And, of course, we will need to stay focused on Yemen, South Sudan and many other locations.

But looking at the working methods of the Council, we are in fact encouraged by one important aspect: flexibility. In addition to the meetings listed on the monthly programme of work, in 2015 the Council held 56 briefings under "Any other business", more than one a week and more than double the total in 2014. We also had 17 Arria Formula meetings, more than in 2013 in 2014 combined. Now, of course, that number of meetings does not equal the number of crises solved, or even averted. We know that. We wish more meetings would translate into more solutions to crises. But I think that these figures do nonetheless show that the Council is seeking to resolve the pressing crises that we face today in a more timely way, often trying in a more innovative manner to address these issues.

I would like to thank the delegation of Uruguay for its leadership of the Council this month and to offer our support to the incoming presidency of Venezuela. I would like also to congratulate the Director of the Security Council Affairs Division, Movses Abelian, for his recently announced promotion and to thank him for his steady stewardship of the Council over the past five years.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): I must begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, for your excellent work in presiding over the Security Council as well as that of your entire team. We are grateful, Sir, for the way in which you led the Council this month, which began so explosively and has been so full of major issues that will continue to be priorities for us in the month of February. It is also a great pleasure to receive the presidency from a Latin American brother after 25 years of absence from the Security Council. Further, in the spirit of the statements of the representatives of Japan, New Zealand, Malaysia and Spain, who took advantage of the opportunity today to reflect on issues that we think are of vital importance in the Council,

going beyond the narrower viewpoints of our national positions, we would like to add the following.

First of all, we support the holding of these wrap-up sessions because we think that, above all, we as non-permanent members need to be transparent and accountable for what we do and say here in the Council, since we are here because we were elected by the General Assembly. We therefore support the accountability initiative as an activity that we will engage in this afternoon with other members of the Assembly.

I cannot help mentioning resolution 2261 (2016) on Colombia as an extraordinary success during your presidency, Mr. President. It is probably only we Latin Americans who can truly appreciate the significance of this step. For over 50 years, Colombia was plunged in a bloody war whose various origins were very closely linked to the social and political situation of all Latin American countries, in particular a violent period of years of political unrest following the assassination of the leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán Ayala. The fact that both the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia—Ejército del Pueblo have asked for Security Council support to monitor and verify the implementation of new peace agreements is not just a recognition of the work of the United Nations. Indeed, through that action, the Security Council is taking on great responsibility to ensure that this culture of violence ceases, that weapons should be laid down and that other mechanisms of war that exist in Colombia should be dismantled, such as paramilitarism, the Plan Colombia and other phenomena that are closely linked to the conflict in that sister nation.

For us, Venezuela, as everyone knows, our liberator, Simón Bolívar, was also Colombia's liberator, as he was the liberator of five other Latin American nations. For us, our army crossed borders only to liberate our Latin American brothers — never to attack any country. As the late President Chávez Frías once said, one of our strongest desires is to see peace — peace and social justice — for our Colombian brothers. We think that the adoption of this resolution was one of the most important achievements in January. We wish to reiterate our thanks to the United Kingdom, which, in a very short amount of time, was able to facilitate a resolution that is to a great extent in line with the agreements that the parties reached during their last meeting in Havana.

Unfortunately, while we have this encouraging news from Colombia, I must confess that we are not comfortable with the way the Security Council is addressing some issues and not others. The Security Council has a very clear mandate pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations. However, there are certain problems that, due to national interests, particularly those of the Council's permanent members, become priorities to such an extent that a single topic is tackled four or five times in a month, when the reality is that there is a conflict throughout entire regions such as the Middle East that requires a shared, joint vision to resolve it.

In this regard, I would highlight the question of Palestine. The issue of Palestine is very frustrating for us and a sign of the failure of the Security Council thus far to work in a coordinated manner. There is no consensus on the subject, and we have been unable to adopt a single resolution in the last seven years. New Zealand proposed a draft resolution. France is trying, and we are expecting a draft resolution. I think the Security Council should truly make it a goal this year to propose a solution for the Palestinian people, because what is happening in Palestine is utterly in violation of international law.

This has nothing to do with Israel, nor it is against the Israelis; we deeply regret the civilian deaths on both sides. This is more a question of international law and the need for the settlement activities in Palestine to end. There is a need for Security Council resolutions to be properly implemented. A response needs to be given to the legitimate concerns of the Palestinian people, with a solution based on the existence of two States. Nor have we been able to promote Palestine becoming accepted as a full-fledged State Member of the United Nations, which is a prerogative of the Security Council and is one of the prerequisites for moving forward in negotiations, in the sense that it should be a given that two States exist. Otherwise, Palestine will continue to be subjected to disproportionate military action by Israel and to an unending settlement process.

While we are gathered here, I would also mention the Palestinian youth and the Palestinian people who are being blockaded in Gaza. These people had expectations and trust in the international community that we have unfortunately failed to live up to.

Also with regard to the Middle East, we need to recognize the situations in Iraq, in Syria and in Libya,

which are all linked. They have the same origin, and at some point we need to carry out an assessment of the Security Council interventions in those conflicts and what the results have been. Today, there are vast territories where State institutions do not exist, where there is no official institution of any kind nor any social fabric that could provide a response for these peoples in the face of the trauma of conflict. In Iraq, in Libya and in Syria, most of the State institutions have collapsed, and in the ensuing vacuum a new phenomenon has arisen — new in terms of its size.

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon. Many countries around this table have suffered from terrorist acts. We have always condemned terrorism on principle, but the terrorism we are seeing today is highly funded with great military might. It is almost an army, and it represents the development of a new kind of war — one that uses social networks and appears capable of countering all coalitions formed to fight it. We believe that the Security Council needs to rethink its action in the face of this new phenomenon in the Middle East and make it a priority so as to address these issues one by one, without leaving any one out.

We have discussed the issue of Syria. What has happened in Syria is a tragedy. We reject the use of starvation and siege against the population itself as a weapon of war. We repudiate the attacks on humanitarian agencies and on civilians. We condemn what happened in Madaya.

But also we raise our voice in outcry against what is happening in Yemen. As I said, there are issues that are just not discussed. The situation in Yemen also needs to be tackled because the same factors underpinning the Syrian crisis are at play in the conflict in Yemen as well. Clearly there needs to be a regional vision for the solution to these conflicts.

With regard to Syria, the enormous effort undertaken by the International Syria Support Group to promote the negotiations in Geneva is an extraordinary opportunity that I hope the Council will not squander. I think Mr. De Mistura deserves the full support of the Security Council. We are troubled that, at this stage, parts of the opposition still have not agreed on who will represent them and have put preconditions on initiating the dialogue. We call on Council members that may have influence on those parties to uphold the agreement and remind them that it was agreed that they were going to begin discussions without preconditions. We have said that humanitarian issues would be prioritized once the peace talks began.

Finally, I must mention the situation in Burundi. We have said on many occasions that we are particularly troubled that 60 or 70 per cent of the conflicts on the agenda of the sanctions committees take place in Africa. That indicates that our brotherly African continent continues to suffer the legacy of its colonialist past and all the divisions within its countries. It is in constant conflict. We appreciate the visit that the Council conducted to Burundi and affirm that any action taken by the Security Council, not withstanding its differences with the authorities of the country concerned, must must be in line with Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

I also thank the countries that have indicated their active support for us as we assume the next presidency. We hope that we will live up to the example of our Latin American predecessor and hope to contribute to international peace and security from that position on the Security Council.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, and your team for a successful presidency. You, Sir, have guided the Council through an eventful month. Uruguay and the other new members of the Council have really hit the ground running. I very much agree with Mr. Motohide Yoshikawa on brevity.

We appreciate that you, Sir, have chosen to hold a wrap-up briefing at the end of your month. I note that the three most recent presidencies all held informal wrap-ups outside the Chamber with all General Assembly members. Those have the same benefit as these formal meetings in terms of transparency, but they have the added benefit of allowing interactivity and allowing all General Assembly colleagues to ask us questions. Whether we do them formally or informally, I hope that we can use these sessions to draw lessons on our working methods. Here are three specific suggestions drawn from experience this month. They are not criticisms of the presidency; quite the opposite, they are encouragement to go further still in modernizing the working methods of the Security Council.

First of all, we saw in Burundi how Council visits can have a real impact on the challenges we face. We sent a strong message when we returned to Burundi just 10 months after our last visit and we made clear during the visit that we expect progress on what I

call the three "Ds": de-escalation, dialogue and some form of deployment of an international presence. However, there is a fourth "D": delay. There was a delay in agreeing the visit to Burundi and I think that delay was not good enough. The situation degenerated and our delay weakened our message at a time when sustained pressure was needed. So, I wonder whether we should move away from consensus in agreeing such visits. If some Council members do not want to come on a visit, let us not allow them to undermine the entire Council. Going further, perhaps there would be value in setting aside a week every four months or so where all Council members would be encouraged to visit an area on our agenda, whether as a whole or in a group or even individually. This so-called visiting week could allow us all to do some real diplomacy and outreach and engagement and even prevention or resolution of conflicts.

Secondly, we are at our best when we respond to events quickly and efficiently. Our work on Colombia this month was a good example of how we can work quickly and flexibly to get an important issue onto our agenda, and I am hopeful that our actions will herald a new era for everyone in Colombia. Even our meeting on Madaya in Syria had a bright side in terms of putting a spotlight on an immediate issue that could put pressure on those responsible. It was well timed, given the London conference next week, and I hope the profile that we have given will encourage every participant in London to pledge generously to help both the immediate and the long-term needs of the people in Syria and the region. That means more support for education, job creation and ultimately more hope for the future.

Not all of our meetings have such a clear purpose. Regular debates, regular briefings and regular consultations fill up our programme of work and often lead just to the repetition of well-known positions, rather than to genuine engagement or progress. The Council adds most value when responding to events as close to real time as possible, rather than according to an arbitrarily fixed reporting cycle. So, rather than clogging up the programme of work, let us try to leave enough time to be agile in the face of ongoing issues. The crises of the world do not operate on a quarterly basis, so our response to them should not either.

Thirdly, and finally, one of the most important responsibilities for the Security Council in 2016 is to recommend to the General Assembly who the next Secretary-General should be. Outside the Security Council, a lot of people are doing good work to help us answer that question. Inside the Council, we have some catching up to do on what we want from the next Secretary-General, what challenges he or she will face and how we can work together to overcome them. To address those questions and more the United Kingdom will call for discussion under the "Any other business" rubric on that issue next month. To ensure that we get the best candidate for the job, it is vital that we mirror the activism being shown on that issue outside the Council.

In conclusion, I commend Mr. Elbio Rosselli for January and wish Mr. Rafael Darío Ramírez Carreño good luck for February. Let us all focus on improving still further our work in terms of our transparency, interactivity, efficiency and impact.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by warmly thanking the Ambassador of Uruguay and his team for all the excellent work they carried out this month. It is no easy task to join the Council and immediately assume such a heavy presidency. You, Mr. President, did so brilliantly and with great competency and professionalism. On behalf of France, I thank and warmly congratulate you, Sir.

There is a great deal to be said at the beginning of this year. I will not go back to the Council's important and difficult mission to Burundi, on which I briefed the Council earlier today. However, I will say that it should encourage us to review our methodology in terms of preparing for such missions, and we must quickly draw political lessons from those visits, in light of the decisions, as I said, taken by the African Union at its Summit.

Today I would like above all to assess the positive trends and signs of hope that are emerging on various important issues with the hope that we will see more hopeful developments in the future. In the Central African Republic, we welcome the commitment of the Transitional Authorities and the Central African people to organizing and participating in the elections of 30 December, which took place peacefully. The constructive engagement of Central African political actors is commendable and should be continued. We also welcome the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga,

who worked to provide political, security and logistical support for the elections.

On 28 January, the Constitutional Court announced the final results of the first round of presidential elections. Technical difficulties led to invalidization of the first round of legislative elections. The objective should still be to complete the transition in accordance with the agreed timetable on 31 March. New electionsand the second round of the presidential election will be held on 14 February. At the end of this election cycle, the Central African Republic will have a freely and democratically elected Government and will be able to continue its reconciliation and stabilization efforts with the support of the international community. Let us remain committed to supporting that momentum.

There has also been good news from Côte d'Ivoire, where the presidential election held in October last year demonstrated the progress made by the country in all areas. Côte d'Ivoire demonstrates the extent to which a peacekeeping mission can assist a country in addressing and emerging from a crisis. The Council drew on the lessons learned by deciding the immediate drawdown of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). Ultimately, the termination of UNOCI will be the best symbol of its success. The strategic review that the Secretariat will conduct over the next two months will enable modalities to be defined. A prompt, effective and well-organized withdrawal of UNOCI will be the best way to build on gains made, demonstrate our confidence in the country and its people, and ensure a strong legacy for Côte d'Ivoire and for international peace and security.

The promising new momentum in intercommunal talks in Cyprus, which the Council acknowledged in the unanimous adoption of resolution 2263 (2016) yesterday, gives us hope. We must continue to relentlessly support the efforts and resolve of the two leaders to reunify the island, in accordance with parameters outlined by the United Nations and in line with the European Union acquis.

Last Monday, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2261 (2016), establishing a United Nations mission to observe and monitor the ceasefire expected in Colombia in the coming months as part of the peace process. As previously mentioned, the adoption of the resolution constitutes a success for the parties as the newly established mission will be a factor in concluding the talks currently under way for a ceasefire. It is also a success for the United Nations and for the Council, which responded promptly to the appeal made by Colombia in an unusual context in which a country turns of its own volition to the Council to request its assistance in implementing a negotiated settlement. We must now meet expectations and ensure that the planning of the mission takes place in a timely manner. France will continue to work resolutely to that end.

January was also a memorable month for non-proliferation, which is a harbinger both of hope and of threats. As to hope, on 16 January the Security Council received a report from the International Atomic Energy Agency confirming that Iran was implementing the initial provisions of the Vienna agreement, thereby triggering Implementation Day. The strict and good-faith implementation of the Vienna agreement will be the only way to guarantee the credibility of the agreement and to ensure that the resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue is sustainable. We will continue to monitor the situation.

With regard to threats, on 6 January that North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test in a gross violation of Security Council resolutions. Such an act poses a serious threat to regional and international peace and security. We agreed to respond by holding emergency consultations on that same day. We hope to swiftly adopt a strong resolution under Chapter VII that will substantially strengthen sanctions. Three weeks after the nuclear test and facing the threat of a ballistic missile test, it is now time for us to take action.

In Syria, there is a prevailing sense of both hope and bitterness. Hope was kindled by the adoption of resolution 2254 (2015) and the prospects for the start of political negotiations, and bitterness by the conditions in which the negotiations are taking placing because there has been no improvement in the humanitarian situation. In early January, humanitarian workers described unbearable conditions in Madaya and other besieged cities in Syria. The Council could not remain indifferent to such testimony. That is why France immediately reacted by calling a public meeting of the Security Council to warn about the plight of civilians in besieged towns in Syria (see S/PV.7610). We recall and stress that humanitarian access to civilian populations is not a favour or concession to be made by the Syrian regime and other players involved; it is an absolute requirement. A credible political process requires an immediate improvement in the situation on the ground for Syrians.

At the public debate on the Middle East held on 26 January (see S/PV.7612), we stressed the importance of a swift start to inter-Syrian negotiations, reiterated the need for rapid and considerable improvement in the humanitarian situation, and called for the discussions to focus on the political transition, in accordance with the terms of the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/523, annex). We hope that the Vienna process will meet those objectives. A political solution alone will put a lasting end to the suffering of civilians and reduce the terrorist threat that we all face.

I conclude by warmly thanking the Uruguayan presidency and wishing Venezuela every success as it assumes the presidency. My last word will be for our dear Movses Abelian, who has been appointed to a new post by the Secretary-General. Movses has embodied the institutional memory of the Council for many years, and has given us his precise, professional and wise counsel seven days a week, 24 hours a day. The French delegation warmly thanks him and wishes him every success in his new and important mission with the General Assembly.

Mr. Lucas (Angola) (*spoke in Spanish*): I congratulate you, Mr. President, and the delegation of Uruguay on your guidance of the work of the Council this month.

(*spoke in English*)

In our view, more than these formal wrap-up sessions by Security Council members — in which we repeat much of what was said in consultations, briefings, debates and open debates — we consider that the interactive dialogues that the President and Council members hold with the wider membership of the United Nations are a more useful tool for the Council's work.

We shall highlight and briefly touch upon the African issues considered this month — namely, the Security Council missions to Burundi, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Libya, the West African region, the Sudan and Somalia — and on two important moments of the Uruguayan presidency: the debate on the protection of civilians (see S/PV.7606) and the one on the Middle East (see S/PV.7610).

Less than a year ago, the Security Council conducted a mission to Burundi, which was viewed then as a success story for a country that had emerged from armed conflict and was on its way to consolidating peace, national reconciliation and economic and social reconstruction. This month, however, the reasons for visiting the country were quite different. Burundi has been plunged into escalating violence, and our expectation is that this mission by the Security Council will make some meaningful contribution to easing tensions in Burundi and facilitating a return to inclusive negotiations in the pursuit of a national consensus towards a better and peaceful future for the country. We thank the French Ambassador for the thorough information he provided to the Council on the Security Council mission (see S/PV.7615).

In Mali, with regard to the implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement signed in May 2015, the commitment of the parties to the Peace Agreement and the progress made so far in its implementation — despite weaknesses, difficulties and serious threats such as the presence of terrorists and international criminal network — Mali deserves credit for the fact that the attainment of durable peace in the country is possible.

The peaceful manner in which just and fair elections took place in Côte d'Ivoire and the virtuous cycle in which the country is apparently engaged are further instances of the substantial changes taking place. In spite of that, concerns remain on the importance of implementing, with renewed determination, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, the reform of the security sector and State institutions, and the deepening of national reconciliation, against the backdrop of the steady drawdown of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

The work, mediation and good offices of the United Nations Office for West Africa have played an important role in stabilizing the region. However, acts of terrorism, drug trafficking and transnational organized crime are serious threats to West Africa's security, while terrorists are a destabilizing force in the north of Mali and the Sahel region as a whole. Boko Haram continues to spread terror, death and destruction in the Lake Chad Basin region, requiring the combined efforts of the international community to combat and defeat them.

The situation in Libya has reached an impasse. The constitution of the Government of national consensus, as foreseen in the Peace Agreement, has not yet become a reality, delaying much-needed concerted efforts to combat the growing terrorist threat, mainly from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

As usual, discussions related to the Sudan revealed significant differences among members of the Council, making it difficult to reach an agreement on a press statement that, still pending, will take stock of the latest Security Council meeting. The situation on the ground remains a matter of great concern, especially with respect to the ongoing rejection by the rebel groups of dialogue on the basis of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and the efforts of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, and to the humanitarian and human rights situations.

With regard to Somalia, during the meeting held yesterday (S/PV.7614), it was stressed that it is important for all Somali actors to focus on national priorities: the organization of elections in 2016, the fight against the Al-Shabaab terrorist group, and the strengthening of Somali security forces. There are challenges that will require the continuous and strong engagement of the international community and commitment of the Security Council.

In the debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/PV.7606), the wider membership of the United Nations expressed its views on that critical issue. The conclusion drawn from the debate was that, despite the establishment by the international community, and the Security Council in particular, of a robust normative framework on the protection of civilians, embodied in several resolutions and presidential statements, and the strengthening of the protection of civilians and human rights mandates in peacekeeping missions, no improvement has been seen on the ground. More civilians continue to be abused, and human rights are violated before the very eyes of peacekeeping missions.

In the open debate on the Middle East (S/PV.7610), there was general agreement that the most pressing issue in the region is to defeat radical extremist groups in order to facilitate a peaceful resolution of the conflict. It is also absolutely necessary that we avoid a scenario in which ISIL consolidates an extremist rogue State in parts of Syria and Iraq as a breeding ground for terrorists. Political, diplomatic, military and economic cooperation must be intensified to start providing, in a short period of time, the tangible rewards of peace and stability to the peoples of the regions, who are increasingly desperate and disillusioned by the policy of double standards and inaction in the face of such catastrophic political, economic and humanitarian conditions.

Mr. Yelchenko (Ukraine): I would like to thank you, Sir, and the entire Uruguayan team for your hard work during the very busy month of January. You have organized and led the Security Council's work in an exemplary fashion, and the Ukrainian delegation applauds your outstanding performance. It was no small feat, given the number of contingencies that have arisen this January. Having said that, I would like to share with you some of my delegation's ideas about the work done by the Council so far.

The subject of the Syrian crisis has been consistently at the centre of the Council's attention. The deplorable humanitarian situation in the country, the fate of the people in besieged towns and cities, the situation around the Syrian chemical weapons programme, the political process to find a way to put an end to the bloody conflict that has been ravaging the country for years — all of this we tried to address. With a heavy heart, I have to say that the Security Council has not performed very well in that area despite all of our efforts. The Syrian people continue to suffer and bear the brunt of the armed conflict waged on their land. Particularly worrying is the use by the parties to the conflict of starvation as a method of warfare. This is absolutely unacceptable, and I say this as a representative of the country that suffered the artificial famine organized by the former Soviet regime during 1932-1933.

It has been said many times in this Chamber that something has to be done about the Syrian crisis. Unfortunately, the words do not always translate into action. I appeal to colleagues around the table that we try to break the vicious cycle of self-perpetuating violence in Syria. One thing is needed: political will — genuine and sincere political will. Without it, no matter how much or how long we continue our debates in the Chamber or in the consultation room, the situation on the ground will not change and innocent people will continue to lose their lives.

Other than the Syrian crisis, we addressed many other subjects. I deliberately choose not to go through all of them, as other colleagues before me have already done so. However, the North Korean nuclear test on 6 January demands the particularly close attention of the Council. This blatant act undermines the very foundations of the global non-proliferation regime, and it cannot be tolerated. A firm response from the Security Council is required. We like to talk about non-proliferation; here we have a clear case of proliferation, yet the Council is very slow to react properly.

The visit of the Security Council to Burundi was a very useful exercise, although quite disappointing. The opportunity to talk to different interlocutors on the ground and see the country first hand was of immense importance for us as Security Council members entrusted with the authority to maintain international peace and stability. The situation in the country will remain a source of concern for the Security Council for quite some time, and we have to remain vigilant so as not to allow the situation to escalate further.

On a different and positive note, I would like to point out the adoption of resolution 2261 (2016) on the establishment of a political mission in Colombia to monitor and verify the implementation of the agreement between the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejército del Pueblo. It was a historic moment for Colombia, and the Ukrainian delegation is proud to have been there to support the efforts to end the longest-lasting civil war in Latin America.

I wish to say a few words on the working methods of the Council. First of all, I strongly support the points made by the delegation of the United Kingdom on Security Council visits and on the process of the selection of the next Secretary-General.

As a member returning to the Council after 15 years, I cannot help but be astonished at the volume of work that the Council does. There are many more items on the agenda, and these items are discussed at much greater length during our meetings. I am afraid, however, that this is a case where more does not mean better. Sometimes we are barely able to consider just one item in one morning or afternoon meeting. I remember that during Ukraine's previous term on the Council 15 years ago, we would cover three or more subjects at once. It is my strong conviction that this area of the Council's work requires significant improvement. I was able to find the following quote after listening to the Japanese Ambassador. "Sometimes not speaking says more than all the words in the world."

I would like to conclude by wishing Venezuela a successful presidency in the coming month of February. Venezuela can fully count on our support.

Mr. Xu Zhongsheng (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China thanks you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting, and expresses its appreciation to the Uruguayan presidency for leading the work of the Security Council to a smooth conclusion in January. With regard to the work of the Council this month, I wish to focus on three points.

The first is the situation in the Middle East. Currently, peace talks between Palestine and Israel have come to a stalemate. The conflict is intensifying, and the security situation is worsening. It is the shared responsibility of the international community to safeguard the legitimate national rights of the Palestine people. The international community should continue to urge for an immediate ceasefire and end to the violence so as to ease the situation. Meanwhile, more vigorous action should be taken to kick-start peace talks and promote an early resumption of negotiations. The international community should create a new mechanism for the restoration of peace, and support the efforts of the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The Security Council should respond positively to the legitimate demands of the Palestinians and other Arab States and consider seriously such questions as the provision of international support to the Palestinian people.

Secondly, China appreciates Special Envoy De Mistura's mediation efforts in Syria and supports the role of the United Nations as the main channel for mediation in the quest for a political solution there. At the moment, there is a significant window of opportunity for achieving such a solution. The international community should continue to support United Nations efforts and work together to maintain the current positive momentum for a political solution, encouraging all Syrian parties to proceed from the overall interests of the nation and its people, and to demonstrate good faith, identify their common interests and resolve their differences so as to enable the current round of talks in Geneva to yield positive results.

Thirdly, positive progress has recently been made on the political process in Somalia. Efforts to build a federal system are making steady progress. China welcomed the convening of a national consultative forum for all Somalis and the consensus that has been reached on the modalities for the elections to be held in 2016. We hope that all the Somali parties will continue to be united in promoting national reconciliation and advancing a political process that is Somali-led and Somali-owned. The international community should continue to provide Somalia with humanitarian assistance and help to ease the humanitarian situation. In accordance with Somalia's needs, we should increase our contributions in the economic and security fields and help Somalia

strengthen its national capacity-building and embark on the road to national development and prosperity as soon as possible.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish Venezuela, the incoming President of the Council for the month of February, success in its work. We also thank Mr. Movses Abelian for his important contributions to the work of the Security Council in the past five years, and wish him success in his new job.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank you personally, Mr. President, and the whole Uruguayan delegation for your skilful and effective presidency of the Council for January.

This month saw a full agenda. We had a thorough consideration of a number of African topics: Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and the situations in Darfur and West Africa. We sent a Security Council mission to Burundi and the headquarters of the African Union, a positive result of which was the President of Burundi's affirmation of his willingness and openness to accept international support for his country's efforts to find a solution to the crisis there. We should take advantage of the opportunity. That solid list shows that the majority of the Council's work has been focused on African problems.

I would particularly like to note the Security Council's adoption on 25 January of resolution 2261 (2016), establishing a United Nations mission in Colombia. We believe that the progress the parties have made in settling their 50-year conflict and the decision to invite the further facilitation of the United Nations constitute an important, perhaps even historic event not only for Colombians but for the region as a whole. Moscow is keeping a keen eye on the course of the negotiations and will maintain its steadfast support to reaching a speedy conclusion to the peace process.

Over the past month, the Council has considered the humanitarian aspects of the internal armed conflict in Syria three times. There can be no doubt that we must not relax our attention to the situation there, given the extremely grave consequences that the conflict, the terrorist atrocities and the attempts of certain external actors to forcibly redraw the centuries-old ethno-religious map of Syria have had for the civilian population. However, we believe that this is not a case where the quantity of meetings reflects their quality. To start with, once the plight of the residents of the besieged cities became the subject of the Council's intense attention, it was treated in a very one-sided and biased way. Secondly, behind this activity there clearly lurks a wish to distract attention from fundamental issues of settlement and perhaps even to sabotage the start of talks in Geneva. We must realize that without the comprehensive political solution that we are all hoping for, the humanitarian situation will not improve.

Unfortunately, we are compelled to conclude that from time to time some delegations exploit their status as members of the Council to politicize and put a propagandistic spin on their own particular priorities, rather than working quietly and painstakingly on the maintenance of international peace and security within the Council's authority under the Charter of the United Nations. That applies in particular to the Arria Formula meeting held a few days ago on the global challenge of accounting for missing persons from conflict, human rights abuses, disasters, organized crime, migration and other involuntary causes. There is no justification for the artificial tying of this topic to the work of the Security Council. There was no prior consultation of Council members on the need for such a meeting, and most were simply presented with a fait accompli. We believe that this undermines the collective principles of the work of the Security Council.

Incidentally, that collective approach helps to improve the effectiveness of the Council's activities, including such important tools as mission visits. In any case, there is nothing to prevent individual Council members from visiting countries they are interested in in their national capacity. We would like to point out that Arria Formula meetings are supposed to be informal confidential occasions for a frank exchange of views in private on the issues that fall under the Security Council's remit. Unfortunately, we are increasingly seeing individual Council members abusing the format by making use of it to push their own initiatives or those of their proxy organizations. Such events should be held on the margins, not paid for under the Organization's budget.

In conclusion, I would like to express our thanks to the outgoing Director of the Security Council Affairs Division, Mr. Movses Abelian, for his assistance and his facilitation of the Council's work, and to congratulate him on his promotion. I would also like to wish the incoming Venezuelan presidency of the Council every success in carrying out its functions.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I will now make a statement in my national capacity and will try to limit it to five minutes, as was recommended by the representative of Japan.

During the month of January, the Security Council has held 17 meetings, 12 consultations, 2 open debates, 1 closed meeting and 1 mission to Burundi and Addis Ababa. We have adopted 4 resolutions and 12 press statements. If we based our productivity on numbers of resolutions and meetings, I am not completely sure what percentage that would constitute. My colleagues have prepared some notes for me concerning which they will probably only be annoyed with me, as usual, because I usually ignore them and do not keep closely to them. But I do not want to repeat everything that has already been said in this Chamber, and I would therefore like to touch on a few specific points that include some positive aspects.

First, there was some good news from Mali and Côte d'Ivoire, and we saw meaningful progress made. The mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus was renewed, and while that in itself is not really important, what is important is the progress that has been made by the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders in advancing a process that we can only hope will be crowned with success.

As a Latin American, the adoption of resolution 2261 (2016) on Colombia, which other colleagues have touched on, is a source of great satisfaction to me, first because I am sure that it will help to move forward the negotiating process for peace, and secondly the Security Council was able to act unanimously by adopting the resolution because under our presidency.

We also believe that the two open debates held on the protection of civilians (see S/PV.7606) and on the Middle East (see S/PV.7610) were positive developments because they once again drew the attention of the Council and its members to those urgent issues. Moreover, the issue of protecting civilians is deeply rooted in other problems with which the Security Council is seized, such as the terrible humanitarian situation unfolding in the Middle East.

With regard to some points of concern, it has been rightly pointed out that we are all concerned over the North Korean nuclear test. This is a very serious problem. We can only hope that the Security Council will adopt a resolution on that issue in a few days.

As Latin Americans, we are very seriously concerned by another suspension of elections in Haiti. That is a real cause for concern because the political establishment in Haiti is displaying an apparent lack of responsibility for complying with the time lines and its obligations to its own society to establish a Government and to carry out the reforms and processes that the people of Haiti have been yearning for. Haiti is one of those places where the Security Council has a clear presence through its peacekeeping operation. To that end, I wonder whether now would be the right time to consider conducting a visit to Haiti in the very near future because we must do our utmost to get the political process back on track in Haiti.

From the humanitarian perspective, the situations in Syria, the Sudan and Yemen, where sieges and hunger are being used as weapons of war and hospitals and school facilities are being attacked, are of grave concern to us. As a new member of the Security Council, we are experiencing a certain degree of frustration because, on the one hand, we see the Council fail to ensure that one member meet its obligations and, on the other hand, that non-State actors are ignoring its pleas. As a new member of the Security Council, I must say that we experience some degree of frustration which I hope will wane with time.

With regard to methods, I should like to share a single consideration. As a new member, I am struck by the fact that the Council has its own momentum and rhythm in dealing with different issues. We often talk about collective wisdom, but I am struck by the fact that we have plenary meetings here — "open meetings", as they are known — where we hear briefings, discuss them and head to the consultation room next door. And that is where we actually read out documents setting forth national positions. Almost no debate takes place. I cannot judge too clearly as I have only been here for 30 days, but we always hear the national positions in the consultation room. We could hear the national positions in the Chamber. Everyone who attends these meetings could hear the statements, and real consultations could take place in the consultation room on how problems can be resolved and what we can accept as a body. This may be a case of my speaking out of turn, but I was keen to share these thoughts with Council members.

I thank all the delegations for their words of congratulations, but those congratulations go to the hard-working team that supports me. Any merit in

our leadership goes to the team, and I accept all the responsibility for any faults.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I formally thank all delegations for their cooperation, and the Secretariat, the interpreters and translators for all their unfailing support. I wish Mr. Abelian the best going forward and thank him directly for his constant support to us.

On behalf of the Council, we wish our brothers and colleagues from Venezuela every success in their presidency which they will take up in February.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7617

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7617th meeting
Tuesday, 9 February 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Ramírez Carreño	(Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of))
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	Egypt	Mr. Mahmoud
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Japan	Mr. Yoshikawa
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Zagaynov
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. Gasso Matoses
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

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16-03160 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): As this is the first official meeting of the Security Council in the month of February, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Elbio Rosselli, Permanent Representative of Uruguay, for his service as President of the Council for the month of January 2016. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Rosselli and his team for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Central African Republic

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2016/52, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

The Council is ready to proceed to a vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, China, Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2264 (2016).

The meeting rose at 10.10 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7618

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7618th meeting

Tuesday, 9 February 2016, 10.10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Ramírez Carreño	(Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of))
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	Egypt	Mr. Mahmoud
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Japan	Mr. Yoshikawa
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Zagaynov
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. Gasso Matoses
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2016/92)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council. Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

16-03166 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2016/92)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/92, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat.

I now give the floor to Mr. Feltman.

Mr. Feltman: I thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to brief the Security Council on the first report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Daesh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2016/92). The report is submitted pursuant to resolution 2253 (2015), which the Council unanimously adopted last December in a meeting (see S/PV.7587) that included Ministers of Finance from around the world — an expression of the strong determination of Member States to address the threat that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) represents to the international community and to the principles and values of the Charter of the United Nations.

Paragraph 97 of the resolution requests the Secretary-General to provide an initial strategic-level report that demonstrates and reflects the gravity of this threat, including

> "foreign terrorist fighters joining ISIL and associated groups and entities, and the sources of financing of these groups ... as well as their planning and facilitation of attacks".

The report also reflects the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering this threat, and contains recommendations for Member States now how to mitigate it, as well as ways in which the United Nations can support these goals. As requested by the Council, the report was prepared

> "with the input of CTED, in close collaboration with the Monitoring Team, as well as other relevant United Nations actors",

including the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and the Office of the Special Envoy for Syria.

Data and imagery provided by Member States on potential routes of illicit trade in oil and oil products taken by ISIL could not be independently verified by the United Nations. Moreover, differences in the material provided point to the difficulty in establishing exact routes and distribution networks, given the variety and flexibility adopted by ISIL. It thus underscores the imperative of close coordination and cooperation among Member States, as demonstrated by the adoption of Security Council resolution 2253 (2015).

The report provides a strategic-level assessment of the threat. It highlights the fact that ISIL's emergence has been facilitated by the protracted conflicts and instability in Iraq and Syria, as well as the weakening of State institutions and the inability of States to exercise effective control over territory and borders. The group, which has benefited from a flow of financial resources and its ties with transnational organized criminals, is expanding its operations to other regions. ISIL's global expansion strategy may be a reaction to recent territorial losses inflicted by international military efforts. In this context, the swift expansion of ISIL operations across West and North Africa, the Middle East, and South and South-East Asia; the increasing number of terrorist groups pledging allegiance to its cause; and the substantial flow of foreign terrorist fighters from around the world are sources of major concern.

ISIL continues to perpetrate appalling human rights abuses against populations under its control, including mass executions, widespread torture, amputations, ethno-sectarian attacks, sexual violence, enslavement

and the systematic recruitment and abuse of children. The Secretary-General has said previously that some of ISIL's crimes, if proven, constitute crimes against humanity. This situation has led to a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented proportions. In Syria alone, around 12 million people have been forced to flee their homes, and more than 13.5 million are in need of humanitarian assistance. Large-scale, systematic destruction and looting of cultural sites are also part of the ISIL strategy.

The report also analyses ISIL finances, highlighting its capacity to rapidly and effectively mobilize vast resources. The main funding sources include the exploitation of oil and other natural resources, so-called taxing, confiscation, the looting of archeological sites, external donations, ransom payments and other financing techniques, such as the use of the Internet and social media to raise funds.

The attraction of ISIL to potential recruits continues unabated, particularly among young people in both developed and developing States. It is estimated that around 30,000 foreign terrorist fighters, originating from over 100 Member States and driven by a number of social, economic and geopolitical conditions, combined with individual circumstances, are actively engaged with ISIL and associated groups. These groups are using the Internet and social media as a promotional and recruitment tool. Information and communication technologies play a crucial role in foreign terrorist fighters' preparations to travel to join ISIL and its affiliates, the training and sharing of effective practices and the planning of attacks.

ISIL sympathizers, acting alone or in small cells, effectively expanded the geographical scope and complexity of their attacks in the second half of 2015, both in terms of planning and facilitation, as the attacks in Beirut, Paris and Jakarta demonstrated. The combination of home-grown small cells and terrorists who travel back and forth from Syria and Iraq, as well as the use of sophisticated technologies to plan the attacks, new logistical and training techniques, suicide attackers and rosters of foreign terrorist fighters with specialized skills all represent new and complex challenges.

In its second part, the report stresses that, while the primary responsibility for countering the threat of ISIL lies with Member States, the United Nations and other international organizations have a critical role to play in supporting the efforts of Member States, and have already taken a number of measures in this regard. These include the assessments of the threat and of States' capacities undertaken by the Monitoring Team of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida, and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate; the development by the CTITF and the United Nations Centre for Counter-Terrorism (UNCCT) of a United Nations capacity-building implementation plan for countering the flow of foreign terrorist fighters; and the development of capacity-building programmes and projects such as those being implemented by UNCCT, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNESCO, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, UN-Women and INTERPOL, among others.

In the third part of the report, the Secretary-General provides a number of strategic responses for Member States and the United Nations to address the threat of ISIL. These include addressing the underlying political and socioeconomic causes of relevant conflicts, particularly in Syria, and strengthening the operational and legal framework needed to choke off ISIL funding.

In the context of countering the financing of terrorism, Member States should ensure the timely exchange of information and financial intelligence, implement relevant Security Council resolutions and strengthen their collaboration with private-sector actors to address the threat. The United Nations should support these efforts in a more comprehensive way, particularly in its field operations, including by enhancing its research on the nexus between ISIL and transnational organized crime and stepping up technical assistance to build Member States' capacities.

In order to counter recruitment and address violent extremism and radicalization, Governments should consider developing national plans of action to prevent violent extremism, focus preventive efforts on education and youth, and strengthen strategies and legal frameworks to address the abuse of information and communication technologies. The United Nations should support these efforts, including through measures proposed by the United Nations plan of action to prevent violent extremism, which is currently under consideration, and the development of new tools that will facilitate cooperation between investigators and prosecutors involved in terrorism cases.

Member States should criminalize foreign terrorist fighters' travel in accordance with relevant resolutions and take measures to strengthen their border-management regimes, including by using INTERPOL databases, assessing foreign terrorist fighters' travel routes and trends on a continuous basis, and improving the exchange of information between States. The United Nations should step up capacity-building assistance in that context.

From preventive to security and criminal justice measures, Member States should strengthen their tools to disrupt ISIL's capacity to plan and facilitate attacks, including through the use of special investigative techniques and effective inter-agency coordination. Applying a case-by-case approach to ISIL returnees and ensuring the support of the United Nations in protecting cultural heritage is also recommended.

In conclusion, despite the efforts of the international community to counter ISIL through military, financial and law enforcement measures, and the substantial losses inflicted upon ISIL, the group continues to pose one of the major challenges of our time to international peace and security. In the face of that common threat, I would like to echo the Secretary-General's call to unity and to action, including in finding political solutions to the conflicts in Syria and Libya. I would like to assure the Council that the United Nations is committed to supporting Member States' efforts.

The Secretary-General will provide an update of this report to the Council in four months' time, as mandated by resolution 2253 (2015).

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Feltman for his informative briefing.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7619

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7619th meeting
Wednesday, 10 February 2016, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Ramírez Carreño	(Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of))
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Xu Zhongsheng
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Sene
	Spain	Mr. Gutiérrez Blanco Navarrete
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

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16-03362 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2016/123, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United States of America.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, China, Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2265 (2016).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation voted in favour of resolution 2265 (2016), guided by its main objective to promote a political settlement in Darfur. In particular, we continue to consider targeted limitations as an important tool for bringing pressure to bear on rebels who refuse to join the talks on the basis of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. If it were not for the duplicitous positions held by some Security Council members, the sanctions mechanism could be used more effectively. We have been raising this issue for many years, but honestly nothing can be done.

Instead, we would like to express our serious concern over the working methods used in putting the draft before the Council by the delegation of the United States, which abused its power as penholder and most inconsiderately inserted its own national priorities into the document. Under the pretext of the good intention of establishing peace in Darfur and by arbitrarily interpreting the recommendations of the sanctions experts, the sponsors sought to increase the pressure on Khartoum by depriving it of one of its largest sources of income. At the same time, they also ignored the positions of other delegations.

Those tactics undermined the unity of the Council. Consequently, the United States delegation was forced to proceed with a strictly technical extension of the sanctions resolution and put the text to the vote. The document does not include important language suggested by the Russian delegation, among others, condemning the violations of the arms embargo by illegal armed groups, the recruitment of rebel child soldiers, attacks on peacekeepers and a call for a full — not a selective — implementation of the Doha Document. The responsibility for those omissions lies entirely with the American side.

We hope that this situation will serve as an important lesson for the United States representative and that, in the future, when drafting resolutions and other Security Council documents, the United States delegation will demonstrate a more reasonable and constructive approach.

Ms. Power (United States of America): We welcome resolution 2265 (2016) to extend the mandate of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1591 (2005).

Following a brief period of relative calm, the past few weeks have been marked by aerial bombardments and ground offensives carried out by the Government of the Sudan in Jebel Mara. The United Nations has reported tens of thousands of civilians displaced and dire humanitarian conditions, yet, the Security Council has been silent.

We have had a sanctions regime in place for 12 years and yet we have not been able to muster consensus on a single designation since 2006. We have had an arms embargo in place for 11 years and year after year we receive report after report of arms flowing illegally into Darfur. We have created a Panel of Experts to provide this kind of reporting, and yet when it does a member

of the Council blocks the report from being published because its findings are so disturbing.

Today's resolution is a technical roll-over, not because the Panel of Experts did not provide findings on how to respond better to the situation. Indeed, the Panel has provided a critical flow of information on the implementation of sanctions in Darfur. Its report provided information that could have better informed our decision-making. For example, the report catalogued numerous violations of the sanctions regime, underscoring the need for greater enforcement by all Member States. It also took note of recurring violations of humanitarian and human rights law. Yes, today's resolution is a technical roll-over because the Council could not agree on even modest attempts to address in the resolution this information on worrying developments in the Darfur region.

We are particularly concerned that the Council was unable to address the role of illicit trafficking in natural resources in fuelling conflict. The nexus between gold trafficking and armed groups, as outlined by the Panel of Experts, is very well known. The Council has addressed without controversy the role of gold and natural resources in other conflicts, such as those in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and even terrorism perpetrated by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

Today, the Council should have built upon the excellent international and regional initiatives under way in this field to tackle this problem in the Sudan context, but because of the Panel's reporting on this issue a Panel's report may never become public, and that is extremely concerning. We urge the Council and those who value the integrity and transparency of the work of the Security Council and its Committees to allow for this report to be published as soon as possible. Some of the same Council members who speak in certain contexts of the need, in theory, for transparency in sanctions regimes — including in a forthcoming meeting of the Council — now seek to block publication of information related to a real sanctions regime in practice because they do not like its findings. We cannot make judgements about what should be transparent and what should not be on the basis of whether the information is convenient or inconvenient.

Finally, allow me to reiterate that, as penholder of this annual renewal, we take seriously our responsibility to consider the Panel's findings and recommendations, and also the views of all members of the Council. Some of those views could not be reconciled with the facts, including the facts presented in the Panel of Experts' report that is being blocked from publication. We look forward to continuing our discussion with colleagues on how best to increase transparency, reinforce compliance with Security Council resolutions, and respond to the findings of the Panel. Truly addressing the issues facing Darfur will require the Council to speak with one voice and to take meaningful steps to help advance peace.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela voted in favour of resolution 2265 (2016), renewing for one year the mandate of the Panel of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan, because we are convinced of the need to preserve the unity of the Security Council in addressing this important issue, and because the Council plays a positive role in promoting a negotiated political solution to the prolonged conflict in that kindred African country, especially in the Darfur region. We believe that the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur creates a framework that should serve as the basis for negotiations among the parties to the conflict, complemented by such initiatives as the national dialogue convened by the Government in Khartoum and the internal consultations in Darfur. We also believe that the efforts made by the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel, led by former President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and the Joint Chief Mediator, are essential to ending the conflict.

With regard to the working methods of the Security Council with respect to the sanctions committees, Venezuela also has serious reservations concerning the functioning of the committees. Tomorrow, when we shall hold a debate on working methods, we will express our opinions on this subject, but I wish to explain that our main observation about the document initially proposed by the penholder on this subject concerns the sovereign right of countries to manage their own natural resources. We wish to invoke and stress the validity of General Assembly resolution 1803 (XVII) of 1962, in which the United Nations recognized the sovereign right of countries to manage their natural resources.

Like many other developing countries, my country is a major producer of natural resources, which are a

fundamental factor in maintaining the stability of our economy. We believe that the Security Council — much less a sanctions committee — should have no say whatsoever in the ability of countries to enjoy their right to profit from the management of their own natural resources, which we hope will always be to the benefit of their peoples.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I take this opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, on your country's accession to the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I am pleased to see your friendly country represented in the Council, which is entrusted by the Charter of the United Nations with the weighty task of maintaining international peace and security. I also congratulate the new members that joined the Council at the beginning of the year.

On 23 November 2015, along with representatives of the neighbouring States Egypt, Chad, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Libya and Uganda, the Sudan participated in the 7th meeting of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan. On 18 December 2015, I received the members of the Panel of Experts at the Permanent Mission of the Sudan to the United Nations, where opinions were exchanged and positive and constructive discussions took place. The members of the Panel expressed their satisfaction at the cooperation demonstrated by the Government of the Sudan with the Committee and the Panel. For instance, the coordinator of the Panel of Experts told me that "the cooperation of the Sudan was excellent". The Panel was not prevented from reaching the sites where incidents had occurred, except in two cases. The cooperation of the Mission of the Sudan was equally thorough.

What concerns us in that respect is the fact that neither these exchanges of opinion nor developments on the ground are referred to in the numerous resolutions adopted by the Council, including resolution 2265 (2016). Furthermore, it is quite clear that the many resolutions of the Security Council on this topic tend to hold the Government of the Sudan responsible for the terrorist and criminal activities of maverick armed groups, and that rather than condemn these rebels, these resolutions repeatedly call on the Government of the Sudan to arrest and prosecute them. Taking into consideration our conviction in the need to bring every criminal to justice, the Council must take the most forceful measures to persuade these armed groups to lay down their weapons and accede without delay to the peace process taking root in Darfur.

The same applies to the attempts of these groups to find ways to obtain the financing and weapons they use to attack the United Nations/African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur. The importance of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur in defining the dividing line is fundamental and has produced good results with the cooperation of the Sudan's neighbours, the League of Arab States and Qatar. We believe firmly that any disregard of the Document contravenes the Charter of the United Nations and is a clear incitement to continued conflict and bloodshed.

Whether or not the conflict ends in a peace agreement, we are confident that the members of the Security Council will make the maintenance of peace and security their top priority. We reiterate our commitment to cooperating with the Panel of Experts in implementing today's resolution while dealing with the pros and cons that have given rise to the multiplicity of bodies involved. We remind the Council of the following strictures that we have asked the Panel of Experts to observe.

The first is that the Panel should not bypass the mandate specified by the Council under resolution 1591 (2005), and the second is that it should keep to the time frame when investigating the inquiries into the various bodies involved. It should observe the requirement of giving prior notification to the Government authorities and alerting it to the Panel's movements, in order to avoid any objections. We must be aware of the movements of the Panel when it is in Darfur. The Panel should not rely for its information on organizations that have no internationally recognized legal status or those with specific political agendas. There is no need to seek information about the Sudanese Government from any source other than the Government itself, and we must have sufficient time to comply. The General Assembly has urged Member States to avoid consulting partisan and unverifiable information sources in their adoption of resolutions and measures. We in the Sudan, as well as the members of the Council, have seen how tendentious information on the Sudan and on other events in other countries in the Middle East has led to the loss of innocent civilian lives.

The meeting rose at 3.25 p.m.